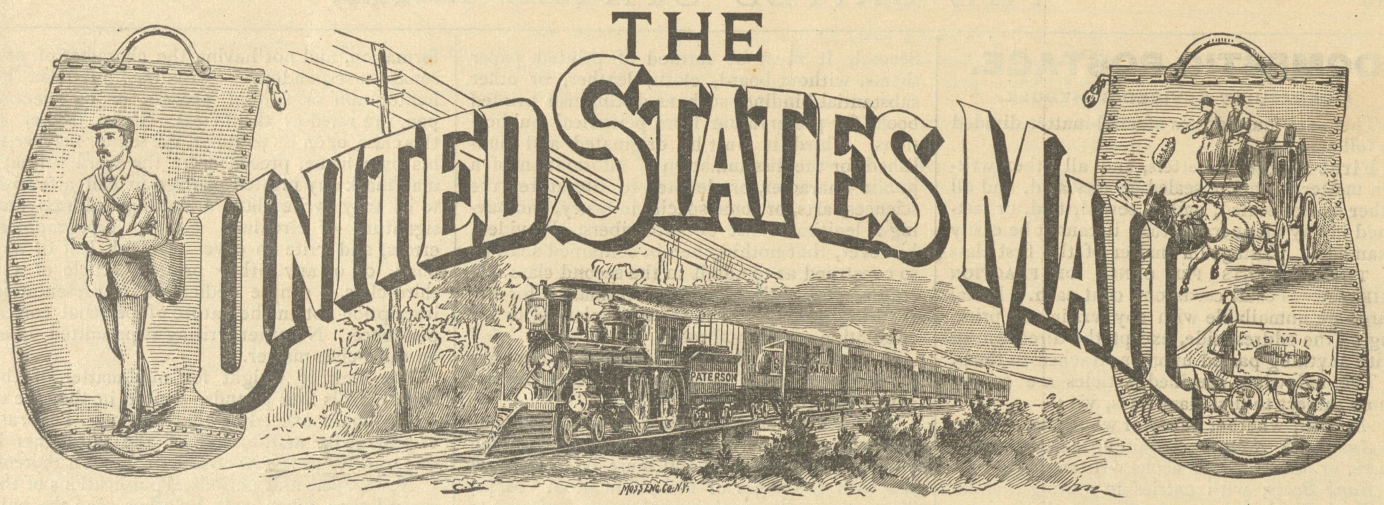



VOL. II. CHICAGO—NEW YORK, NOVEMBER, 1886 No. 26.

## WORDS OF WISDOM.

*From Ex-Governor Wakefield, of Minnesota.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
January 30, 1886.

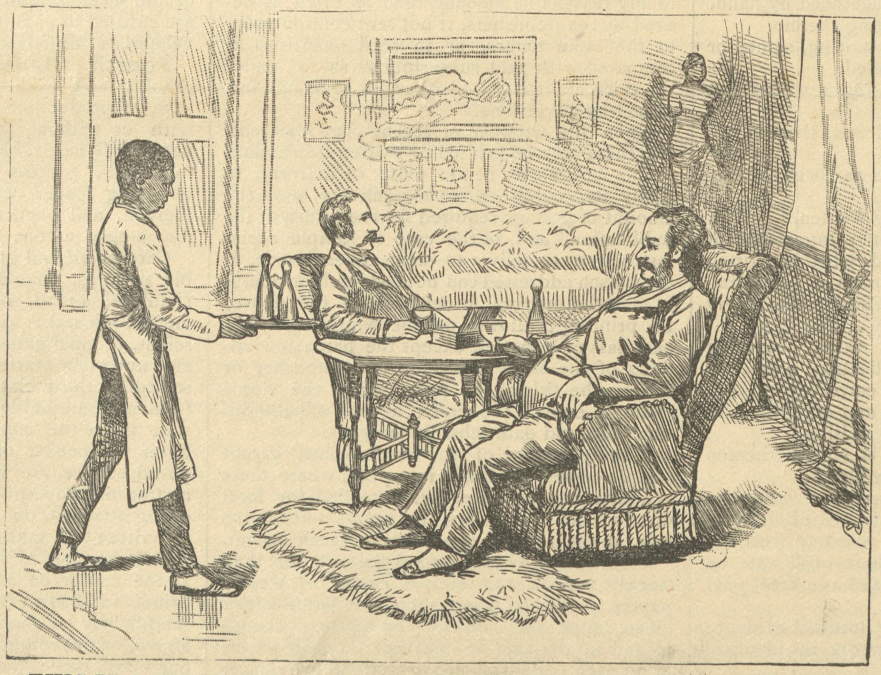
DEAR SIR:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of recent date, calling my attention to your circular sent to me some weeks since, relating to matters affecting the interests of postmasters of the third and fourth class throughout the country. If I correctly understand the object of the convention to be held at Chicago on the 15th proximo by the gentlemen representing the two grades of government service above mentioned, it is one that enlists my warmest sympathy and approval. I earnestly hope that the results of your deliberations may be manifested in a speedy redress of the grievances that have inspired your organization. I think the conception of your public gathering a happy and wise one. By public and free discussion and a full and candid exposition of the facts that bear upon the wrongs you seek to have righted by national legislation, you may, and no doubt will, be able to create a public sentiment that will make itself felt in the halls of Congress, and will ultimately compel the lawmakers of the country to inaugurate and perfect such measures of relief as you are justly entitled to.

As a member of the Post-office Committee in the Forty-eighth Congress, my attention was directed to the great injustice that was being done to the incumbents of the third and fourth-class post-offices, and I favored such amendments of our postal laws as would probably recognize and sufficiently compensate the faithfulness and efficiency and arduous service of these two classes of our public servants. I think the failure to accomplish anything in this direction hitherto has been due in great part to the mistaken policy of the Post-office Department, that from an early day has sought to make itself self-sustaining.

The first and second-class offices have seldom found any difficulty in securing such appropriations as they asked for, because they have had standing at their backs the commercial and political influence of the populous and wealthy cities, within whose limits they are established. They have absorbed, without compunction, all allowances for rent, fuel and furniture, and have, by their increased demands from year to year, so impressed themselves and their needs upon the Post-office Department that the claims of the hard-worked and poorly-paid officials in the third and fourth-class offices have been utterly and shamefully ignored. Under the plan of economy, and to make a record for careful expenditure, the money appropriated by Congress for clerk-hire has been kept back from those for whom it was intended, for no other reason that I can conceive of than to be covered into the treasury as an evidence of economical expenditure.

Very truly yours, J. B. WAKEFIELD.

## SOMETHING FOR CONGRESSMEN TO LOOK AT.



THIS IS A FIRST-CLASS POSTMASTER. SALARY, $6,000 PER ANNUM.

*From Hon. H. H. Bingham.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
February 11, 1886.

SIR:—There are at this time many bills before the committee on post-offices and post-roads of the house of representatives for their action and consideration, a number of which relate especially to the interest of post-masters of the third and fourth classes. I do not think I trespass upon the independent and nice judgment of my associates on the committee when I state that the legislation proposed will receive their careful and thoughtful action. The forty-eighth Congress incorporated in the Congressional post-office appropriation bill, approved March 3, 1885, a proviso giving the postmaster general discretionary authority to lease premises for the use of post-offices of the third class from July 1 last, but provision for the payment of rent was not made. The additional appropriation required for carrying out the proviso would have been about $600,000. Congress, however, failed to appropriate any sum of money larger than the amount asked for and deemed necessary to pay the rent, fuel and light for the current fiscal year. In fact, the amount appropriated was $10,000 less than the sum estimated for first and second-class offices. This proviso in the act approved March 3, 1885, will become inoperative under the rules governing the forty-ninth Congress. The general post-office appropriation bill will be prepared and submitted in the house by the committee on post-offices and post-roads under the rules. The bill, therefore, becomes purely a money bill, and can not embrace legislation of any character. It will simply appropriate under existing statutes.

I am in favor of any legislation that will place offices of the third class on an equal footing with those of the first and second classes, so far as rent, fuel, light and stationery are concerned. Any community that has business so extensive as to have its post office in class three is entitled to a large, clean and well-appointed office, subject and under the control of the department.

It is your right to come before Congress and petition for relief whenever and wherever you think yourselves oppressed. Your convention will embrace many delegates who have been in the public service a long time, and whose knowledge and experience are indeed valuable, not only to the department, but to Congress and the people. Let your recommendations and suggestions be embodied in legislative form, so that their value and usefulness can be immediately considered and the 55,000,000 people whom the postmasters of the country daily come in contact with may receive the benefit. Wherever the postal service can be made more efficient, more convenient and more reliable, do not fail to clearly and carefully formulate it. You will be judged by your work, and I am sure your grievances will be so expressed that Congress can not fail to give you a respectful and patient hearing, and your suggestions for the improvement of the service will be so practical that your convention can result only in that in which all your friends confidently hope—an intelligent expression by intelligent men upon the subjects.

Very truly yours, HENRY H. BINGHAM.

# DOMESTIC POSTAGE.

### A CAREFULLY REVISED SCHEDULE.

There are four classes of mail-matter divided as follows:

**First Class.**—Letters, and all other written matter, whether sealed or unsealed, and all other matter sealed, nailed, sewed, tied, or fastened in any manner, so that it cannot be easily examined. Postage on matter of the first class is TWO (2) CENTS PER OUNCE OR FRACTION THEREOF. Postal cards one cent each. Postal cards are unmailable with any writing or printing on the address side, except the direction, or with anything pasted upon or attached to them.

The following specified articles are among those subject to first-class rates, viz.:

*Accounts*, whether partly or wholly in writing.

*Autograph Albums* containing written signatures, or other miscellaneous written matter.

*Bank Books*, with entries in writing therein.

*Bank Checks*, when written, and whether canceled or uncanceled.

*Bills*, when written or partly written.

*Books*, when presented for mailing with letters.

*Cartes de visite*, or visiting cards, with written addresses thereon.

*Checks*, when partly written, whether signed or not, or canceled or uncanceled.

*Contracts*, wholly or partly in writing.

*Copies*, made by type-writer or caligraph, or other similar processes.

*Copies of manuscript* for publication, when not accompanied by proof-sheets or corrected proofs of same.

*Correspondence*, when actual and personal, whether the communication is wholly or partly in writing, or is prepared by type-writer, caligraph, or other similar processes.

*Deeds*, wholly or partly in writing, whether executed or unexecuted.

*Designs*, or plans drawn or sketched by hand.

*Diaries*, with entries in writing therein.

*Drafts*, wholly or partly in writing, signed or unsigned, canceled or uncanceled.

*Drawings*, plans or designs, drawn or sketched by hand.

*Envelopes*, with written addresses thereon.

*Etching*, drawn by hand.

*Insurance Policies*, wholly or partly in writing, and applications therefor.

*Invitations*, wholly or partly written.

*Letters*, whether written or printed, (except circulars. See Sec. 204), and whether written by hand, or type-writer, caligraph or other similar process. "Old letters," whether sent singly or in bulk.

*Manuscript Matter*, maps, music, or other manuscript designed for publication, unless accompanied by proof-sheets or corrected proofs.

*Mortgages*, real or personal, and other deeds or contracts, wholly or partly in writing.

*Photographs*, when matter is written thereon other than the name of the sender.

*Packages*, when sealed or sewed or otherwise closed against inspection. If one full rate be paid they will be forwarded, rated up with the deficient postage. If less than a full rate be paid, the package will be treated as a short paid letter.

*Printed Letters*, not bearing internal evidence of being sent to several persons in identical terms.

*Promissory Notes*, wholly or partly in writing, signed or unsigned.

*Receipts*, whether wholly or partly in writing, except receipts for subscription to, and inclosed with, second-class publications.

*Signatures* to personal communications, made by hand-stamp as well as handwriting.

*Stenographic* or short-hand notes.

*Telegrams*, when offered for mailing are letters, and not to be receipted for unless registered.

**Drop Letters.**—Drop letters require postage at the rate of two cents for each ounce or fraction thereof at letter-carrier offices, and one cent at all other offices.

**Second-Class.**—This embraces all newspapers and other periodical publications within the following conditions: First, it must be regularly issued at stated intervals, as frequently as four times a year, and bear a date of issue. Second, it must be formed of printed paper sheets, without board, cloth, leather, or other substantial binding, such as distinguish printed books for preservation from periodical publications. Third, it must be originated and published for the dissemination of information of a public character, or devoted to literature, the sciences, arts, or some special industry, and having a legitimate list of subscribers: Provided, however, that nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to admit to the second class rate regular publications designed primarily for advertising purposes, or for free circulation, or for circulation at nominal rates.

Second-class mail-matter can have no advertising sheets, notices, memoranda or circulars enclosed therein,

All advertisements in magazines must be *permanently* attached thereto by binding, printing pasting, or otherwise, and must be of uniform size with the pages of the publication. Maps, diagrams, or illustrations which are referred to in the publication, or form a necessary part thereof, are admissible. There can also be enclosed in the paper, but they can not be mailed separately, supplements, with the name of the publications they supplement, and date of issue, under the requirements of ruling 324, Jan., 1885, Official *Postal Guide*. There may also be enclosed bills or receipts covering subscriptions (not for advertising), on which the number and names of papers enclosed may be designated, or orders in blank for subscription (without additional matter), to be filled up and returned by the addressee. A supplement and order, bills, receipts, etc., cannot be combined in one. Any other addition to a regular publication than those indicated above, subject the whole to higher rates of postage.

Sample copies, marked sample or specimen on the wrapper or paper itself, either singly or in quantity, may be sent by mail to one address, to any reasonable amount, and as often as desired by the publishers, if not sent continuously, to the same names, or in such quantities as compared with paid subscriptions as to render the price of the paper nominal, or to names furnished by advertisers.

Upon the wrapper of second-class mail matter, there may be printed or written instructions to the postmaster at the office of delivery, to notify the publisher of non-delivery, and the amount of postage required for the return of the publication, and, in the case of sample copies instructions to deliver to some other person, if the person addressed can not be found, or refuses to take the matter. In addition to the above, no printing is allowed on the wrappers of second-class mail-matter, except the name and address of the office of publication, publisher or sender, the title of the publication, the words "sample copy," the index figures of subscription book and date subscription ends.

Weekly papers of the second-class, except sample copies, published in a place where there is a letter-carrier office, can be mailed for local distribution by carriers, or points outside the city, at the rate of one cent for each pound.

Publications of the second-class, other than weekly papers, and sample copies of weekly papers, published where there is a letter-carrier office, must be paid for by postage stamps affixed at the rate of one cent for each paper, or on each periodical not exceeding two ounces in weight, or two cents on each periodical if weighing over two ounces, if they are to be delivered by carrier in the city of publication. If they are to be delivered through the lock boxes, or through the general delivery, they can be mailed at pound rates. Weekly papers of the second class can be distributed in the county where *printed and published*, free, provided they are not to be delivered at letter-carrier offices or distributed by carriers.

THE POSTAGE ON SECOND-CLASS MATTER IS ONE CENT PER POUND.

**Third Class.**—This embraces printed books, pamphlets, circulars, engravings, lithographs, proof-sheets and manuscripts accompanying the same, transient newspapers and periodicals (except those belonging in the second class) and all matter of the same general character, the printing on which is designed to instruct, amuse, cultivate the mind or taste, or impart general information, and not having the character of personal correspondence. Circulars produced by hektograph or similar process, or by electric pen, are rated as third-class. Upon matter of this class, or on its wrapper, the sender may write his own name, preceded by the word "from;" may mark any printed passage to call attention to it, may write date of mailing, address and signature of circulars, correct typographical errors, and write on cover or blank leaf of any book, or of any other printed article of the third-class, a simple dedication or presentation inscription not in the nature of personal correspondence. No other writing is permitted in or on third-class matter.

The limit of weight for mail-matter of the third class is four pounds, expect in the case of single books exceeding that weight. The rate of postage on mail-matter of the third class is one cent for each two ounces or fraction thereof.

Newspapers and periodical publications of the second class, when sent by other than the publisher or news agents, are mailable at the rate of one cent for each four ounces or fractional part thereof.

Daily and weekly papers and monthly magazines are generally second-class publications, and usually bear on the title page the words "Entered at the Post-office at ——— as second-class matter." They are subject to the above rate; but publications which are intended for advertising purposes or for free distribution, and circulars, books and other miscellaneous printed matter of similar nature, are chargeable with third-class rates, *i. e.*, one cent for each two ounces or fractional part thereof.

**Printed Circulars**—May bear the date of mailing, address, and signature in writing at third-class rates.

**Reproduction by Electric Pen and other Processes.**—Reproductions from originals produced by the electric pen, papyrograph, metalograph, and chirograph processes, are entitled to pass in the mails in unsealed envelopes as third-class matter.

**Fourth Class.**—This embraces photographic and stereoptic views, photograph albums, reproductions by solar process, envelopes with or without printing, blank bills, letter heads, bill heads, blank cards, visiting or playing cards, address tags, labels, paper sacks, wrapping paper with printed advertisements thereon, and blanks of any kind are rated as fourth-class matter.

Card board and other flexible materials, flexible patterns, envelopes, maps mounted, merchandise, models, sample cards, samples of ores, metals, minerals, seeds, cuttings, bulbs, roots, scions, original paintings in oil or water colors, and any other matter not included in the first, second or third classes, and which is not in its form or nature liable to destroy, deface or otherwise injure the contents of the mail bag, or harm the person of any one engaged in the postal service, are rated as fourth-class. Such matter may have to each separate article a label or tag attached, on which there can be printed or written ONE mark, name, number or letter, for the purpose of identification, and only one. If the matter be a sample sheet of cloths or prints, and has on it a number of samples, each sample may be numbered by pen or pencil as above, or the whole sheet may be designated by one mark, name, number or letter for the purpose of identification; where the sheet itself is numbered by pen or pencil, marks in writing by pen or pencil on each separate sample must be omitted. The price and size of the article may be *printed or stamped* on such tag or label; but more than ONE *written* mark, number, name, or letter, will subject the package to postage at *letter rates*. The limit of weight for packages of Fourth-Class matter is Four Pounds. THE RATE OF POSTAGE ON MAIL-MATTER OF THE FOURTH CLASS IS ONE CENT FOR EACH OUNCE OR FRACTION THEREOF.

**Unmailable.**—Poisons, explosives, pastes, fresh fruits, animals, alive or dead, articles having an offensive odor, obscene and indecent books, prints or other articles, and envelopes, postal cards or packages on which obscene and indecent addresses or messages appear, are absolutely excluded from the mails.

(*See next page.*)

**Exceptions.**—*Hard soap* and *pocket-knives* may now be sent through the mails, if wrapped securely in heavy paper.

*Candy*, *confectionery*, *glass* and other articles liable to injure the contents of the mail-bags, may be sent through the mails when they conform to the following conditions:

1. They must be placed in a bag, box or removable envelope made of paper, cloth or parchment.

2. Such bag, box or envelope must again be placed in a box, or tube made of metal or some hard wood, with sliding clasp or screw lid.

In case of *sharp-pointed instruments*, the points must be capped or encased, so that they may not by any means be liable to cut through their enclosure, and where they have blades, such blades must be bound with wire, so that they shall remain firmly attached to each other.

1. **Money-Orders.** — The money-order system was established to promote the public convenience, and to secure safety in the transfer, *through the mails*, of small sums of money.

2. The regulations of the money-order system are very stringent, and postmasters are never permitted to depart from them.

3. After a money-order has once been paid, no matter by whom presented, the Post-Office Department will not be liable to any further claim therefor.

4. In sending a money-order by mail, never enclose it in the same letter with the information regarding it.

5. In making an application for a money-order, be sure and state the given name, as well as the surname, of the person in whose favor it is to be drawn.

6. Whenever it is possible, the correct address—such as street and number—of both the person taking out the order and the person to whom it should be given.

7. Money-orders are never payable on the day of issue.

8. A money-order can not be drawn for more than $100, and when a larger amount is desired, additional orders must be obtained to make it up.

9. No one person can secure more than three money-orders on the same office in one day, when made payable to the same payee.

10. Whenever a money-order has been incorrectly drawn, or when the remitter desires to change the place of payment, the postmaster is authorized to take back the first order and issue another, but another fee is exacted on the new transaction.

11. If a new order becomes necessary on account of a mistake made by the postmaster, he is compelled to issue a new one and charge himself with the fee.

1. **Post-Office Boxes.**—No box in a post-office can be assigned to the use of any person or firm, unless rent thereof shall have been paid *three months in advance*. THIS LAW IS IMPERATIVE.

2. When the rent of a box remains due and unpaid *ten* days after the expiration of the quarter, it is the duty of the postmaster to declare it *vacant* and place the mail belonging to the holder in the general delivery.

3. Two or more families or firms can not combine together and *jointly* rent a box.

4. A postmaster has the right to refuse to rent a box when he has good reason to believe that it will be used to promote indecent or illegal enterprises. Whenever he finds that any person to whom he has rented a box or drawer, is using it for the promotion of some such purpose, it is his duty to withhold its further use from him, and, at the same time, return a proportionate amount of the rent for the unexpired portion of the quarter.

5. Postmasters are not permitted to disclose to outsiders the names of persons renting post-office boxes.

6. In cities where the post-office building and fixtures do not belong to the Government, private parties are allowed to furnish lock-boxes or drawers, at their own expense; but, even in that case, when so furnished, they instantly become the property of the United States, and are subject to the direction and control of the Post-Office Department.

1. **The Registry System.**—This is one of the most valuable and important features of our postal system, and should be more liberally patronized by the public. It is just as expeditious as the express companies, while for small articles it is very much cheaper.

2. Any article regarded as mailable, may be registered.

3. The fee for registering a letter or parcel is ten cents, in addition to the regular postage, whatever that may be. For example, to register a simple letter, on which the postage is two cents, the entire expense would be but twelve cents. If you desire to register an article of merchandise weighing five ounces, you would have to pay the regular postage of one cent an ounce and ten cents additional for registering, making fifteen cents in all.

4. All articles belonging to the third or fourth class, presented for registering, must be so wrapped as to admit of examination *without destroying the wrapper*, for if it is not so wrapped, the postage will be charged at letter rates.

5. Two or more letters or parcels addressed to, or intended for, the same person, can not be tied or otherwise fastened together and registered as one.

6. Any post-office in the United States is duly authorized to receive and register mail-matter.

7. Articles intended for foreign countries included in the Universal Postal Union may be registered just the same as if intended for this country, and the same fee of ten cents is charged.

8. Postmasters may, if they desire to do so, but they are not compelled to, transact any registry business on Sunday.

9. A single package of third or fourth-class matter, to be sent to one address, provided its weight comes within the limit fixed by law, may be registered by the payment of a single registry fee without regard to the number of articles it may contain.

10. But postmasters are not permitted to accept verbal statements from senders as to the *contents* of packages, but make an examination themselves and see to which class they belong.

11. If a package is presented for registering containing articles belonging both to the third and fourth-class, postage is charged upon the entire package at fourth-class rates. Or, if it contains a letter or any writing whatever, the postage would be charged upon the whole at letter rates.

1. **Postal Cards.**—Postal cards issued by private parties are subject to letter rates when they contain any written matter in addition to the *date* and *address*.

2. An unclaimed postal card is not returned to the writer, even though his address is given upon it, but is sent to the dead letter office.

3. Postal cards that have been split open and written upon the inside are not mailable.

4. Postal cards are handled with as much care and promptness in the matter of *dispatch* and *delivery* as though they were letters, even though the matter there is printed.

5. There is nothing in the postal law prohibiting a "dun" or threat of prosecution being sent by mail.

6. A postal is regarded as unmailable if it has anything pasted or attached to it, but it can be forwarded if sufficient amount of postage is affixed.

7. A postal card is not mailable with any writing or printing on the address side except the *address*.

1. **Postal Notes.**—A postal note, not presented for payment within three months from the last day of the month of issue, becomes *invalid*.

2. To get your money back on a postal note which has *expired*, it is necessary for you to present it at the paying or issuing office and sign an application for a duplicate, to be issued by the Superintendent of the Money Order System, Washington, D. C. This will cost you three cents.

3. If a postal note is lost or destroyed, *no duplicate can be issued*. This regulation is never departed from. It becomes necessary from the fact that postal notes are all made payable to *bearer*.

4. A postal note is also payable at the office of issue at any time within three months from the date of issue.

5. Postal notes are issued for sums of $4.99 or less, and the charge is only three cents, no matter what the amount.

6. Never leave the post-office, after procuring a postal note, without first examining it to see whether it had been properly filled.

## SPECIAL DELIVERY.

By the act of March 4, the special delivery system has been extended to every post-office in the United States and embraces every class of mail matter. (See UNITED STATES MAIL, page 190, for 1886.)

The special delivery stamp must be in addition to the lawful postage, and letters not prepaid with at least one full rate of postage, in accordance with the law and regulations, must be treated as held-for-postage, even though bearing a special delivery stamp.

Registered letters will be entitled to immediate delivery, the same as ordinary letters, when bearing a special delivery stamp in addition to the full postage and registry fee required by the law and the regulations.

Special delivery letters will be delivered by messenger within a radius of one mile from the post-office.

If a letter bearing special delivery stamp is directed to an address beyond one mile from the post-office, such letter need not be specially delivered, unless the delivery can be made to the person addressed within the limits.

The hours within which immediate delivery is made are from 7 a. m. to 7 p. m., and further until the arrival of the last mail, provided that such an arrival be not later than 9 p. m. This requirement as to the hours of delivery does not necessarily extend to the transaction of any other postal business after the usual office hours.

Postmasters are not required to make delivery of special delivery matter on Sunday, nor to keep their offices open in any different manner on that day from what is now provided by regulation. Postmasters are at liberty, however, to deliver special delivery letters and parcels arriving on Sunday, if they desire to do so.

Special delivery matter must be delivered to the addressee, or to any one specially authorized to receive his mail-matter. In his absence and that of any one having such special authority, such matter may be delivered to any responsible member of the addressee's family, or any partner or clerk of his, or responsible person employed in his office; and to the officer or agent of any firm or incorporated company, or public institution to which addressed. In the case of registered matter received for special delivery, the usual registry receipts, in addition to the special delivery receipts, must be taken, and all other requirements of the registry regulations must be observed.

For every special delivery article delivered the postmaster must take a receipt from the party receiving it.

After a special delivery article has been taken out for delivery, and has been returned with the information that the person addressed has removed to the delivery of another office, and the article is then forwarded, it is not regarded as entitled to special delivery at the second office.

When an effort has once been made to deliver an article by special delivery, but such delivery is not made, through no fault of the messenger employed, it is regarded by the Department as having been made, and a second attempt at delivery is not obligatory.

Special delivery stamps are to be sold by postmasters in any required amount, and to any person who may apply for them, but they can be used only for the purpose of securing the immediate delivery of matter. Under no circumstances are they to be used in the payment of postage of any description or of the registry fee, *nor can any other stamps be employed to secure special delivery*, except the special-delivery stamp. The special-delivery stamp *must be in addition to the lawful postage*, and any article of first-class matter not prepaid with at least one full rate of postage, and any parcel of any other class of matter, the postage on which has not been fully prepaid, in accordance with the law and the regulations, must be treated as held-for-postage, even though bearing a special delivery stamp.

## THE SPECIAL DELIVERY.

### HOW IT WORKS AT THE SMALL POST-OFFICES.

"Well, well, it's a good joke, that special delivery," writes a postmaster from way out in Nebraska. "Don't you think," he says, "I walked just one mile, the other day, through a heavy rain, to deliver a *circular* to a man out on the outskirts of town, and after I handed it to the person addressed, he tore it up and said he did not thank me to come out to his house with advertising matter for a soap manufacturer, and said I was a d—d fool to do it. And then to think that on the very next mail there was received at my office eighty more circulars from the same firm, and all of them with a special delivery stamp on them. I simply distributed them as I would ordinary mail-matter and made no more deliveries except to parties near my office. I have tried to get boys who would deliver all special matter of that kind, but they soon tire of it and quit. On all rainy days they never show up."

Another postmaster, living in New York, writes as follows: "I am not greatly in love with the special delivery system, at least not so far as it pertains to my office. If the delivery was confined to first class matter it would not be so bad; but to make a man walk all over town to deliver a newspaper or a parcel or a circular, is not just. We are business men and have our offices and our business to look after, and to compel us to go out and sometimes lock up our offices, as I have done to deliver a package of no earthly value, is not even fair to the public, much less to ourselves. I have paid boys twenty-five cents to deliver a letter a long distance from my store rather than do it myself and subject my patrons to the annoyance of coming to the post-office and not able to get in. You can say for me that I don't like that feature of the law which compels me to make deliveries one mile from my office."

A postmaster from Ohio says: "The boys I hire to make my special deliveries quit after a service of a few days, when the novelty has worn off, and then if I have none I have to go myself. I would vote to do away with the whole business."

Another Ohio postmaster writes: "See here! can't you kill the special delivery? It don't suit me! I have some enemies here who go to Columbus or Newark and buy special delivery stamps and then come back here and put them on empty boxes and newspapers and address the package to parties a long distance from my office, and then laugh to see the annoyance and inconvenience they put me to to deliver them. I do not object to deliver *letters*, but when it comes to newspapers or merchandise, I object."

An Illinois postmaster says: "Don't give me away, but I am dead set against this new business. There is no money in it to anybody, neither to the Government, the postmaster, the messenger who makes the delivery or to the person addressed. I walked three-quarters of a mile yesterday to deliver a package of patent medicine circulars, and the mud was almost over my boot-tops. I looked like a tramp when I got back to my office, and I was twenty minutes cleaning myself up. I was a horrible sight, and to say that I was *mad* don't begin to express it. This office votes no!"

THE UNITED STATES MAIL has received over one hundred letters touching this business, and not *one* of them is favorable to the law as it stands at present. There is no use in quoting further to show how unpopular it is, for the testimony is all against it.

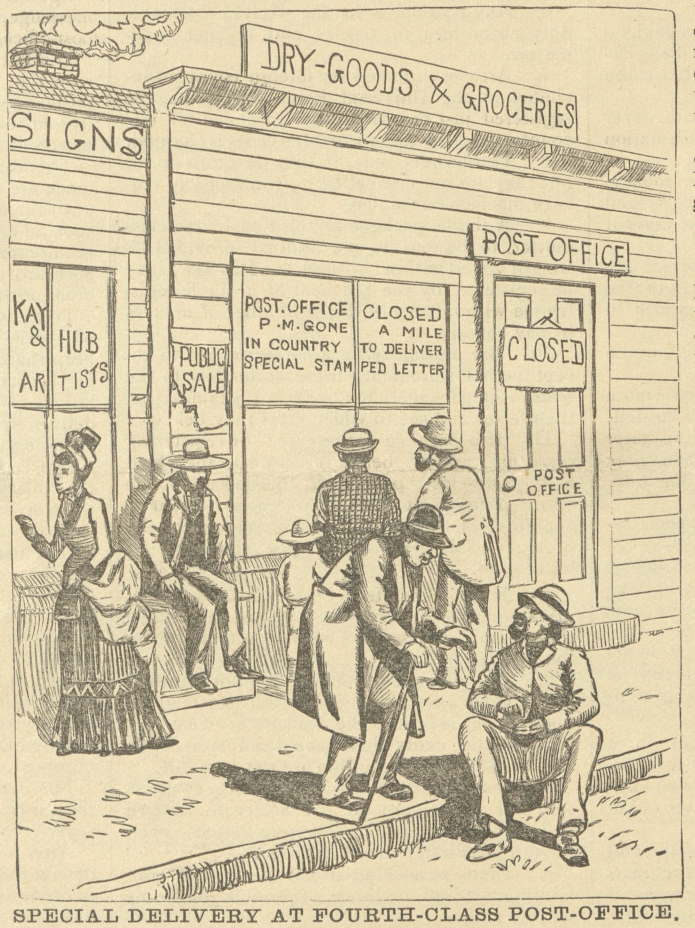
The law, however, would be popular, even as it is, if the delivery was confined to about *one-quarter of a mile from the post-office*. It is the long distance the messenger must travel to make many of his deliveries, that renders it objectionable. The compensation is too insignificant to pay a person to tramp two miles. The postmaster can't afford to do it, and he can't find many persons who will do it for him, and the result is that he is often in a quandary as to what to do.

The law works very well, however, at third-class offices, even as it is, for there boys are more plentiful and messengers may be secured; but at the fourth-class offices it is very different, and when a postmaster has no clerk he can send and can find no boy, there is nothing left for him but to make the trip himself.

A man went to Milwaukee, lately, and bought a suit of clothes and sent it home to himself by mail, making two packages of it, one weighing three pounds and the other four. As he lived almost a mile away from the post-office, he attached two special delivery stamps and thus compelled his postmaster to carry his big bundle home for him. He was saved the labor of it for twenty cents.

The law needs regulating, and we hope congressmen will *do it at once*.

The illustrations we have here presented of the special delivery, tells its own story, and we commend them to the law-making power of the Government.




SPECIAL DELIVERY AT FOURTH-CLASS POST-OFFICE.

## THE MONEY ORDER BUSINESS.

We are confident that we represent the exact sentiment of every third and fourth-class postmaster of a money-order office when we assert that there is not one such postmaster but would gladly pay to the Government from his salary each year a sum equal to all commissions derived from the money-order business, could such payment relieve him entirely from the transaction of such business. That there is no adequate compensation, neither in view of the responsibility assumed nor the labor performed. In any other business it would seem almost ridiculous to consider 50 cents to $2.00 per week sufficient compensation for the transaction of a business considered of such importance that a separate bond of from $2,000 to $5,000 is required to insure its faithful performance; but in this service the figures quoted quite fairly represent the responsibility assumed and the pay received. When the compensation is considered in the light of the labor performed, the result is even less creditable to the Government. We do not hesitate to say that in the average third and fourth-class money-order offices the weekly fees received will but little more than pay for the actual risk involved in the daily transportation of the funds received to the designated depository to which they must go before the postmaster's responsibility ceases. An expert copyist can only make fair wages at a rate of 10 cents per 100 words; but in the service in question men who are not experts are compelled to perform this class of work at an average of less than 5 cents per 100 words, or less than one-half of what is considered adequate in any other business.

There is probably not a third or fourth-class post-office conducting a money-order business where the actual work involved will not consume one-third of the postmaster's entire time, provided he attends to it in person, and yet it brings to him, as a rule, not one-twentieth part of the income which he derives from his office.

The surplus revenue last year from the money-order business alone was $408,933.20, which is ample evidence that the fees charged the public for the issuing of money orders are too high, or the compensation allowed postmasters for the transaction of the business is entirely inadequate.

A remedy is proposed for this state of things in the Postmasters' Bill No. 7,474, and it is hoped that congressmen will apply it.

## READING POSTAL CARDS.

A lady postmistress was asked, not long since, why it was that the mails were so much delayed of late. "Indeed, sir," said she, "there are so many of these postal cards for me to read that it takes my whole time, so that I can't attend to the mails." "Great heavens, woman! you don't pretend to read all the postal cards deposited in your office, do you?" said the anxious inquirer. "Why, of course I do," innocently answered the lady official, "for as nothing scurrilous, obscene, or wicked must be written on them, I must first read them myself in order to ascertain whether it would be proper to let them pass through the office. I stand here as a sentinel upon the watch-tower to guard the morals of the community. Business is only secondary to purity and virtue. To read these postal cards I am determined; yes, and carefully, too."

NO VALUABLE package should ever be mailed unless it is *registered*.

Send no *cash money* by mail. It is much safer and cheaper in the long run to buy a money order or postal note.

## LOST MAIL MATTER.

All inquiries, whether from postmasters or the public, relative to lost or missing mail-matter of every description, both foreign and domestic, ordinary and registered, should be addressed to the Chief Post-office Inspector, Post-office Department, Washington, D. C., to whom all losses or irregularities should be reported as soon as knowledge is had of their occurrence.

All inquiries or communications relative to mail-matter which is supposed to have been sent to the dead letter office, should be addressed to the Superintendent of the Dead Letter Office, Washington, D. C.

In such cases the letter of inquiry must state to whom and what post-office the article was addressed, and give the name and full address of the writer or sender, the date and place of mailing, and a brief description of the contents. If it is known when the missing matter was sent to the dead letter office, the date and the reason for sending should be given. If registered, the number should also be furnished.

If losses are promptly reported it will be the means of correcting irregularities, and the interest of the public will be enhanced thereby.

## HOW TO SEND THINGS BY MAIL.

There are a countless variety of articles sent by mail, from a dress to be laundried to a dainty flower; and when we consider how many careless hands there are, and thoughtless heads, too, set to this work, the wonder arises, not that so many are lost, but that so many reach their destination despite the loose manner in which they are done up and the many mistakes made in directing them.

Every one is, or ought to be, acquainted with the rules for sending various grades of goods through the mails. No parcels should be sealed, for they might contain contraband stuff. All writing inside is strictly interdicted, for good reasons, on all second-class mail-matter. If you want to write so much as two words you must pay letter postage for it, or be liable to do so at any rate.

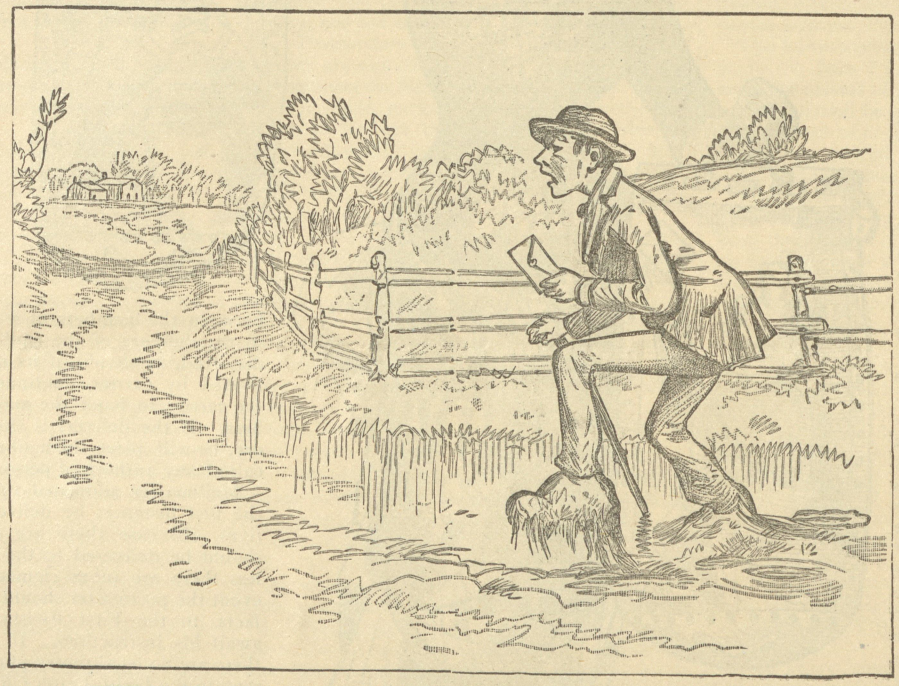
There may be a charm in evading the post-office laws, just as there is in evading the Custom-house laws, but it is attended with the same danger of discovery and punishment.

But your parcels must be fastened securely; so you generally take a piece of twine to tie up the package, which is quite right. But you should remember that it has to go through a great many hands, and very often is shaken together with other articles in a jumble worthy of a grab-bag at a country fair. The right way properly to secure a parcel, for instance, of dry goods, is to fold it in the smallest possible compass consistent with keeping the articles from being creased; then roll a soft piece of paper around, secured with an elastic; this will not add much to the weight, and will ensure its not being soiled in case the outer wrapper is disturbed; then have a good, stout piece of brown paper, and fold that neatly around, turning the ends in on each side, and then up over the top, creasing them so as to make a square, compact and neat package. Any one in doubt how to do this deftly had better observe the salesman in a dry goods store the next time she goes to buy a dress. Next take twine, but not too coarse—flax twine is the best, as it will not snap and break in tying—cross it over both sides, and tie it in the middle. Now direct your parcel clearly and distinctly with the name of the receiver in full, as well as the post-office address. Do not leave out the name of the county or the state. Lastly, take two pieces of twine of equal length, one for each end, pass each of these around the narrowest end of the bundle in such a way as to catch the longest cord both above and below, and tie them securely together. Any woman who is familiar with crochet-work knows just how this is done; the object is to prevent the long strings from slipping off, which is the reason nine-tenths of the packages sent by mail get lost. The last two cords must be passed around the main one, or else it will not be secure; and pray observe that you must tie your knot very tight, first a good, strong knot, then a small bow knot is advisable. For want of such care in simply tying a knot we have known handsome embroidery and delicate silk received half out of their wraps, the only wonder being that the contents ever kept company with the address at all.

If you are sending any fragile articles, such as shells, jewelry, fans, combs, or trinkets of any sort, by mail do not fail to put them in a box, and fill up the interstices with raw cotton, which will prevent their rattling, keep them free from the action of the atmosphere, and insure their not being broken. The same may be said of any china or glass ware, which should invariably be wrapped in cotton batting before being boxed. Indeed, we strongly recommend that all delicate articles, such as lace, buttons, ribbons, etc., should be put in a box. Put an elastic over the box to keep the cover in place even if the wrap comes loose. Then do your box up in good, strong brown paper, and tie up as before suggested. Boxes are now made so light, of such a variety of shapes and sizes, that no one can fail to find a suitable one on occasion, and really they add very little to the weight in comparison with the security of your parcel. The expense is trifling. Who would grudge a few cents in saving as many dollars, perhaps ten times as many?

Now as regards plants. The conveyance of plants is a link between distant countries. The introduction of new plants is perhaps as efficient philanthropy as can be practiced, for they advance civilization and increase our knowledge; they fertilize waste places, and beautify barren ones. As plants, seeds and cut flowers can all be carried safely and cheaply by mail, every one should, in his or her humble sphere, endeavor to do something toward spreading useful and rare plants by sending them to distant friends, to mission stations, and out-of-the-way places, if travelers or explorers, to institutions of learning and museums of natural science. But what is the best protection for such in conveying them through the mails? If living plants, they should be very carefully spread out so that the roots should be as little disturbed as possible. Line a box of the proper size with fresh moss from the woods, free from earth or stones. Then place them on this mossy bed, and cover carefully with the same. Dampen it slightly. Close the lid of the box tight—a cigar box is best for these frail, delicate objects, as a pasteboard one is best for other things. Put an elastic band around the box, tie up in stout paper with a piece of twine, and mark it distinctly as before directed, and in one corner put the words, "Plants only." When it can be procured, the Southern Spanish moss is the very best thing to use in packing plants.

Seeds need only be put in a dry, tight box, and as you can not put any writing inside let them be done up in different colored papers. For instance, blue, seeds of larkspur; pink, petunias; yellow, nasturtium, etc.; and then on a postal card sent *separately* designate what flowers are in such or such papers. There will then be no trouble. Or you might gum on the outside of your papers printed numbers or letters cut from newspapers—1, 2, 3, or a, b, c for instance—and then send the glossary by mail on a postal card.



THE P. M. ON HIS WAY MAKING A DELIVERY ONE MILE IN THE COUNTRY.

Books are often sent by mail, and they should invariably be left open on one end in order to show what they are, but it is not necessary to leave the covers of the book out so as to have their freshness rubbed off.

Many persons keep a neat pair of scales and thus are able to weigh their own mail.

To conclude, in all packages and documents sent by mail remember as an invariable rule that unless the address and the inclosure keep together there is no hope of identifying the goods sent.

## SERIOUS CHARGE AGAINST A POSTMASTER.

"Oh, he's had it long enough, and he's too confounded strict. He permits no one to go inside of his office, except on business; and then he keeps no chairs for folks to sit on. He won't accommodate our bank by depositing his post-office and money-order fund in it; he won't credit our best men for box rents or quarterly postage on newspapers; he won't put a stamp on a letter unless it is paid for, and every one does not have the change in his pocket. And yet I have seen this stickler for two cents give away nickels and ten-cent stamps to miserable beggars, who made him believe they were famishing for sustenance without even questioning them. He refuses to allow people who own boxes close to the delivery window to reach through and help themselves, to save time. He refuses to put stamps on letters for anybody but old people and children. He charges letter postage on newspapers, if people wish to write only a word or two to their friends on the margin. He won't keep his office open later than 9 o'clock at night, and on Sunday only an hour before and after church. He weighs nearly every letter dropped into the office, and if it is what he calls 'overweight,' he charges an additional postage. He refuses to deliver anonymous letters. He won't even give credit for money orders, postal notes, postal cards or postage stamps. But the crowning objection to him is, that he refuses to clean out the office, boxes and all, for one night, and let a fair be held there for the benefit of our base ball club. We don't like him, we don't want him and we won't have him, and if he is not removed we will boycot him, and that's what's the matter."

## APPLICATION FOR DEAD LETTERS.

Dead letters are such as have been advertised and have remained on hand one month. Missing letters should be first inquired for at the post-office to which they were directed, and unless found to have been returned to the Dead Letter Office, applications to the department will be useless. The disposition of dead letters being dependent upon the classification, according to the contents of value in money or other property, such contents must be specifically stated in all applications to the department.

For identification of letters the following information is also necessary: Address on letter in full, name of writer, where mailed, when mailed, or when advertised, or when sent to the Dead Letter Office, and whether held for postage, registered or not.

All proper names, including the full post-office address of the applicant, should be written with the utmost attainable distinctness, and all inquiries relative to dead letters should be addressed to the "Third Assistant Postmaster General."

## THE UNITED STATES MALE AND FEMALE.

While America would never submit to a king, yet she *might* succumb to a queen. The fact is, woman is already empress of these States United. Man kneels before her as his mistress and acknowledges the supremacy of her power. Whatever position woman may hold in other nations of the earth, it can not be denied that in this country she holds the balance of power. Men yield blind obedience to her will, and her slightest wish is regarded as law and gospel.

The illustration on this page is typical of the United States Male and Female, and exhibits, in a striking manner, the relative position of the two toward each other. It shows how man pays court to woman in this country, and to what extremes of supplication he will resort to to possess her. The United States mails are loaded with his professions of love, and if we could only read his missives as we read his countenance as pictured on the mail bags, we would have a very interesting exercise.

This sketch was drawn for us to represent MISS FRANCES LARAWAY, the beautiful young lady stamp clerk at the Minneapolis post-office, who is said to be the handsomest lady in that city. She is tall, graceful, highly educated, and very modest, laying no stress whatever upon her bright, gray eyes, her raven hair, or her symmetrical figure. The young men of her native city are all frantic about her, and even the old bald heads evince a mysterious eagerness to visit the post-office for mail; but knowing ones understand that it is for *female*, and it is said that the sale of stamps there is far in excess of the stamps cancelled, and all because the men folks up there visit the post-office for the sole purpose of getting a peep at this great beauty, and some of them don't receive three postals a year. Never receiving any mail, they make an excuse for calling by making purchase of a postage stamp or a postal card.

Taken altogether, the United States Female is a wonderful product, almost as much so as THE UNITED STATES MAIL itself.

There are over 9,000 ladies in the postal service of the United States, and if the men were only half as good, half as honest and half as faithful, there would be even a better service than that which we have.

We extend our compliments to the ladies of the post-office, and beg of them to accept our best wishes. They are staunch friends of THE UNITED STATES MAIL, and we propose to stand by them till Gabriel blows his trump, *and that he'll never do.* They have been constant readers of our paper and have stood by us in our work as only women know how to do. God bless them!

THE UNITED STATES MALE AND FEMALE.

## DELIVERY OF MAIL MATTER.

The persons entitled to articles of mail-matter received by mail are those whose names are in the address; and the delivery should be either to the person addressed, or according to his or her order. The order is in some eases implied, as where a person is in the habit of receiving his mail through his son, clerk, or servant, and of recognizing the delivery to him. The person, other than the addressee, to whom it is delivered, must have a general or special authority to receive it. The postmaster in any case where he doubts the authority given verbally, may demand that it be reduced to writing, and signed and carefu ly filed for reference.

Neither husband nor wife can control the delivery or correspondence addressed to the other. When so instructed, a postmaster must refuse to deliver letters to the husband which are addressed to the wife, or those to the wife which are addressed to the husband. In the absence of instructions to the contrary, the wife's letters should be placed in the husband's box, and delivered to him with his own letters.

Letters and packages addressed to fictitious persons or firms, to initials, or to no particular person or firm, unless directed to be delivered at a designated place, as a post-office box street, and number, or to the care of a certain person or firm, or other certain place of delivery within the delivery of the post-office to which they are addressed, are undeliverable, unless the envelope of the letter or package shall contain the card of the sender, or a request to return, in which cases the letters or packages should be promptly returned to the office indicated by the card or request.

A person engaged in legitmate business, may adopt a business name, and receive mail, whether registered or ordinary, by that name. He may also use his own name at the same time, but the postmaster must be satisfied of his good faith.

A package addressed "To any intelligent farmer" is undeliverable, because addressed to no particular person. Registered matter addressed to initials or fictitious names (except where legitimately used) can not be delivered.

Letters addressed to a convict serving a term of imprisonment, should be delivered to the warden or other officer in charge of the prisoners. Letters addressed to a person imprisoned to await trial, should be delivered according to the order of the person addressed, at any time before conviction and sentence. Until after sentence, the letters must be subject to the order of the person imprisoned, unless the seizure of his papers be authorized by due judicial proceedings. In the absence of any order from the prisoner or his attorney, his letters will be delivered to the person in whose custody he is held. Such person has no authority to open his letters without the prisoner's consent.

Mail matter addressed to a firm may be delivered to any member of it. If addressed to several persons, it may be handed to any one of them. Mail-matter addressed to a corporation should be delivered to the agent or officer conducting its correspondence, or to such officer or agent or messenger as is authorized by the corporation to receive its mail. Matter addressed to a person as agent or officer of a corporation, will be delivered to such officer or agent.

A postmaster is not required to decide disputes between the members of a dissolved or existing firm as to the delivery of the mail-matter. If the firm is not dissolved, he should, if its mail has habitually been delivered by carrier, continue such delivery, instructing the carrier to hand the mail-matter to any of its members. If the delivery is through box or general delivery, he will place the mail-matter therein, to await the call of any authorized person.

Mail-matter addressed to a deceased person must, in the first instance, be delivered to his legal representatives. In case there are no legal representatives, it should be delivered to the widow, if there be one, unless there are other claimants for the same, in which event the postmaster should report the case, with all the facts, to the First Assistant Postmaster-General, and await his instructions. If various parties claim it, and there are no legal representatives or widow, it should be sent to the Dead Letter Office with a statement of the facts bearing upon the case.

Where mail-matter may be addressed to a firm which has ceased to exist, and having reached its destination through the mails is claimed by different parties, and some of the claimants, in order to determine their rights in the premises, subsequently institute a suit against others in the local courts, and obtain an order from the court, enjoining the postmaster from delivering the mail-matter to either party, the postmaster should respect the order of the court by retaining the same and delivering it to the parties who shall be finally determined by the court to be legally entitled to it.

In the case of minor children residing with their parents, and dependent upon them for maintenance and support, such parents are entitled to control the correspondence of the aforesaid minors, by directing the disposition to be made of mail-matter addressed to them.

A letter once placed in the post-office is in the custody of the Department for transmission and delivery to the party addressed. Neither postmaster, inspectors, employees of the Department, nor officers of the law have any authority to open it, under the pretext that there might be something improper or even criminal in it, or that would aid in the detection, or furnish evidence for the conviction, of offenders against the law. A letter of an accused person must be delivered to him, unless he may otherwise direct.

## A THRILLING EXPERIENCE.

### HANGING TO A MAIL-CATCHER WITH THE TRAIN RUNNING AT LIGHTNING SPEED.

"Night before last, when the eastern bound passenger train on the Norfolk and Western Railroad reached Central, two of the United States postal clerks, B. W. Bocock and George H. Southall, left their car to get something to eat, leaving a third man in the car. Presently, however, the solitary clerk, likewise afflicted with hunger, left the car, locking the door after him, so that when Postal Clerk Southall returned he found the door fastened. Reaching up, he unlocked the door, as he thought, and just then the train moved off with a jerk. Mr. Southall grasped the appliance used to catch the mail of small post-offices, where the train makes no stop, and drew himself up into the car door; but when he attempted to enter the car he found the door secured. The train by this time was dashing along at lightning speed, and Southall, finding that nothing remained for him to do but to hold on to the mail-catcher until the train reached New River, the next station, or elsewise jump off and run the risk of losing his life, accepted the former situation as preferable, and tightened his grip on the iron rod. The night was as cold as a March blizzard could make it, and the wind played fantastic tricks with Southall's locks and whistled through his garments after an uncommonly annoying fashion. The spacious part of his pantaloons flapped and boomed like a circus canvas. The train sped on the faster, and the faster it sped on the gladder it made Southall, for its quick arrival at New River was his only hope of salvation. The most serious aspect of this night-ride was the severe physical pain it caused the unhappy postal-clerk. The mental stress and the fear of being hurled with tremenduous violence to the earth was bad enough; but in addition to this, to have to grasp and hold on to a cold iron rod, with fingers cut and hands benumbed, is an experience that no man need want to test. Southall was equal to the occasion, however, and he embraced that iron rod with great tenacity until the train reached New River, when he quietly dismounted and modestly related his thrilling adventure to the train men. His fellow-clerk, Mr. Bocock, had ridden from Central to New River on the rear platform of the postal car. In relating the incident yesterday, Mr. Southall said he stood it pretty well until the train thundered across the New River bridge, 'and then I thought,' said he, 'if the good Lord will see me through this time, I'll join the Salvation Army, sure!'"—*Lynchburg News.*

THE POSTAL CLERK'S PERIL.

**☞Every postmaster in the United States should send two dollars for the U. S. MAIL for one year, and thereby keep thoroughly informed in postal matters. It will save you much trouble and annoyance.☜**

## THE ANSWERING OF LETTERS.

Of all welcome tasks, surely that of answering letters ought to be the most eagerly cherished. Nobody is waited for with more real anxiety than the postman. Though he comes ever so often, he never worries. A delicious flavor of anticipation and a spice of uncertainty hang over his quick, imperative ring. What has he brought now? He is like a messenger of destiny, himself uninterested, void of speculation, unstirred by surprise, as he rapidly passes in his freight, addressed to people whom he does not know. In his mysterical repository which after all is only a stout, black bag, he carries a whole world of conflicting hopes and fears. Here is a thin missive, directed in a tremulous, angular hand, and it has crossed the sea to tell, in a remote household, of the death of one whom the head of the house calls father, but from whom he parted so many years ago that he has come to be little more than a memory. Here is a school-boy's jolly letter home. Here tender message from friend to friend, sweet and full in its outpouring of affection. Whatever the letter be about, it will be opened with expectation, and read with desire to take in its purport and intention. There is a divine quality of beneficence in the postal system which annihilates distances and brings the scattered members of a family close together, so that heart feels heart, and hands clasp, though miles lie between them. In the olden days, dim and beautiful through the shadows of the past, angels were wont to visit men, and often tent door and temple portico were thrilled with their flute like voices. Now, though the golden winged messengers come no more in visible shape, they have learned to fold themselves up, and to carry their words of cheer or of warning in four-square envelopes, borne far and near by steam.

Everybody is delighted to receive letters, but few are equally pleased with the work of answering them. The nature of a pleasant correspondence differs little from that of an agreeable conversation. It would be hard to keep up bright and cheery talk if one party suffered hours of other occupation to drift between himself and his answer. The ordinary way with many people is to read and enjoy a letter, and then lay it away in desk or drawer until a convenient season comes for writing a reply. So doing, the freshness and glow which it awakened have gone by the time that the pen and paper are taken for the return letter. The sense of nearness has receded. The duties of the days between and the pressure of home cares have laid a pile of accumulated materials, most of them alien, upon the feelings which the letter awakened. Instead of something vivid, descriptive, charming and natural, the effort to write a duty letter succeeds in producing that which is stiff and artificial as wax flowers compared with a real one. If letters were, as a rule, answered on the day of their arrival, or shortly after, they would cease to be a task, and would be regarded as a diversion. Then, too, the thought of formality should be carefully eliminated from them. Certain conventionalities help us to carry on our life-work smoothly and pleasantly, and it is only the boor who thinks that time spent in courteous observances is time thrown away. Yet she, who in writing her letter to her friend, translates her thoughts out of colloquial English into the English of books, is very likely to take out of it the individuality of expression which would have made it beautiful. A home letter should tell all sorts of little things about home. The bits of fun which enliven the day, the domestic incidents, the droll sayings of children, and the small and trifling occurrences, which are undignified, but delightful, have their place in a letter.

Only one rule we would make about the answering of letters. If there has been that in the one you received which touched a painful chord in your breast, which awakened harsh or regretful, or bitter feelings, then be slow with your reply. Do not hasten to send away the utterances of a morbid mood, the accents of impatience, or the upbraidings of anger. To overcast another's sky by your own transient petulance, or even by your just indignation, is not best. There is a permanence about that which is unfortunate to give to any but the sweeter and purer emotions of the heart

No lovelier, and certainly no more desirable, accomplishment can be possessed than the faculty of writing happy and graceful letters.

# THE UNITED STATES MAIL.

MONTHLY.

ONE YEAR, - - - - - $2.00
SIX MONTHS, - - - - - 1.00
SINGLE COPIES, - - - 20 CENTS.
TEN COPIES, - - ONE DOLLAR.

JOHN H. PATTERSON, EDITOR.

*Remittances should be made to the order of* THE UNITED STATES MAIL, *and should be by money order, postal note, or registered letter.*

THE UNITED STATES MAIL *is the only journal in this country, of legitimate circulation, depending entirely upon its merits for public patronage, devoted to the interests of the postal service.*

*Entered at the Post-Office at Chicago for transmission through the mails at second-class postal rates.*

CHICAGO, 196 LA SALLE STREET.
NEW YORK, 53, 55, AND 57 PARK PLACE.


## BOYCOTTING.

No man worthy the name of *citizen* will try and break down his post-office by the unfair means of boycotting it. If a postmaster must perform the labor of handling all *incoming* mail, then he is entitled by every law of right to handle that which is *outgoing*. To compel him to perform labor without compensating him for it, is only a little less than robbery, and the good people in a community where such a system of fraud is practiced, should *combine* and put it down.

We are glad to announce, however, that this thing of boycotting postmasters is rapidly passing away, for it never paid the parties who did it and in some cases worked disastrously to them.

We say again, that no good citizen will boycot a postmaster or look with favor upon others who do so; for the post-office belongs to the *people* and the people are expected to sustain it, no matter who is the postmaster.

Let us have done with this relic of barbarism and slavery.

## NOT EVEN FIXTURES PROVIDED.

In every other department of the Government where its employees are required to transact a large, intricate and responsible business; every necessary facility is furnished to properly conduct it. But it is not so, however, with the third and fourth-class postmasters of the country. It has remained for Congress to require them to provide at their own expense everything necessary to transact the business of their offices, and to protect the public property, for which they are held to such strict account. In offices of the classes named, the postmaster, from his own means, must provide a satisfactory outfit of boxes, furniture and fixtures of every description, including desks, conveniences for keeping the blanks, and a suitable safe for the security of Government funds and valuable letters. In fact the only articles furnished by the Department are the dating and canceling stamp and the letter scale. It would seem no more than just and fair that where the Government transacts a large and confidential business like that of a post-office, that it should provide the necessary equipment to properly and efficiently conduct it.

HAVE you taken the trouble to recommend THE UNITED STATES MAIL to some postmaster in your county who has not as yet subscribed? You will help the cause by so doing.

## WITHDRAWING LETTERS FROM THE MAILS.

After a letter has passed from the mailing post-office the delivery of the same may be prevented, and its return to the writer secured, by an application by the writer to the postmaster at the office of mailing, stating reasons therefor, identifying the letter, and support such application with sufficient proof in writing. Upon such application and evidence, and upon a deposit being made by the writer of a sum sufficient to cover all expenses incurred, the postmaster shall telegraph a request for the return of such letter to his office, if it has been forwarded, to the postmaster at the office of address, carefully describing the same, so as to identify it and prevent the return of any other matter. On receipt of such request the postmaster at the office of address should return such letter to the mailing postmaster (in a penalty envelope), who will deliver it to the writer upon payment of all expenses and of letter rate of postage on the matter returned, on the envelope of which postage-due stamps of the proper value must be placed and canceled, and upon the prepayment also of a registered package, addressed to the First Assistant Postmaster-General, Division of Correspondence, in which the postmaster shall inclose and forward the application of the writer and all proofs submitted by him, together with the writer's receipt for it, and the envelope of the returned letter.

A letter may be returned to the writer before it has been dispatched, provided a search for it would not retard the business of the office or involve the delay of mail; but in every case the person applying for the withdrawal of such mail must prove his identity.

## KISSES BY MAIL.

A young postmaster of a village post-office was hard at work when a gentle tap was heard upon the door, and in stepped a bashful maiden of sixteen, with a money-order, which she desired cashed. She handed it to the official with a bashful smile, who, after closely examining it, handed her the money it called for. At the same time he asked her if she had read what was written on the margin of the order.

"No, I have not," she replied, "for I cannot make it out. Will you please read it for me?"

The young postmaster read as follows: "I send you three dollars and a dozen kisses."

Glancing at the bashful girl, he said: "Now, I have paid you the money and I suppose you want the kisses."

"Yes," she said, "if he has sent me any kisses I want them, too."

It is hardly necessary to say that the balance of the order was promptly paid, and in a scientific manner at that and eminently satisfactory to the country maiden, for she went out of the office smacking her lips as if there was a taste upon them she never encountered before.

After she arrived home she remarked to her mother: "Eh, mother, but this post-office system of ours is a great thing, developing more and more every year, and each new feature added seems to be the best. Jimmie sent me a dozen kisses along with the money order and the postmaster gave me twenty. It beats the special delivery system all hollow."

THERE is a town in Illinois named *Breeze*. The P. M. must be a *windy* fellow.

## THE SECOND-CLASS OFFICES.

It now is a well-known fact that in some instances towns of general inferior commercial importance contain second-class offices simply because of the fortunate possession of some school or college or large industrial establishment whose use of the mails produce sufficient postal revenue to throw the office into the second grade. A third-class office may be located at the intersection of two or three railroads; it may be a growing, thriving, prosperous community, and the work of the office, in its separation and distribution of the mails, may be extremely excessive and severe, but yet the gross receipts of that office may entitle the postmaster to a salary of only $1,900—all his expenses for rent, light, and fuel, and the bulk of his expenditures for clerk-hire, must be liquidated out of his own pocket. Not so, however, with the incumbent of a second-class office located in a town, perhaps, of even less population than the other. His town may be practically lifeless, possessing no elements of prosperity, but yet because of the fortunate possession, as before stated, of some school or college or some one or two large manufacturing establishments, his office is raised to the dignity of second-class and the Government steps in and pays all the office expenses. These expenses consist of rent, light, fuel, clerk-hire, stationery, and other incidentals. In all offices of the first and second grades allowances are made by the Department covering all such expenditures, so that under no circumstances do the salaries of such postmasters suffer any diminution on account of such outlays. But in third-class offices located in many towns but slightly inferior in importance to those containing second-class offices, and whose citizens need, and rightfully demand, as well-located, convenient, and well-appointed offices, in every respect, as those of the second-class, postmasters are compelled to liquidate all such expenditures out of their salaries or their private funds.

## A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS.

"I see that the mail-car along with several passenger coaches was burned up the other night on the Milwaukee road at a little station called Rio, and all the mail destroyed."

"You don't tell me! Where was it bound?"

"Going north to Minneapolis and St. Paul."

"To Minneapolis! Good! good!"

"Good? What on earth is there *good* about it?"

"Why, you see, I owe a man in Minneapolis a little amount, and I've promised to send it to him till he won't take promises any longer."

"What's that got to do with it?"

"Everything, everything. I'll go right off now and write, asking him why in tunket he doesn't send a receipt for that money that I sent him last—last— What day did you say that mail-car was burned?"

THE following letter was recently received at the Post-Office Department from Postmaster Nutt, of New Mexico:

Our town has gone to the "sweet bye-and-bye;" but only one family left. I respectfully resign my position as postmaster here. "Westward the star of empire takes its way," and also the postmaster.

AS AN illustration of the knowledge some people possess regarding the postal laws, we quote the two following incidents: One person sent postage stamps to pay his box rent, and another cut a two cent stamp in halves to take the place of one cent postage on two drop letters.

## A NEW METHOD TO COMPUTE BUSINESS.

One of the evils of the present time is the boycotting of post-offices. Some do so for political reasons, while others do so on account of personal spite; because they are in a position to deprive the postmaster of a part of his legitimate income, and take pleasure in exhibiting the smallness of their nature.

Then there are business men who mail almost all their letters on the cars, simply because it is more convenient, perhaps, than to carry them to the post-office, and so, unthoughtedly, they are doing a wrong to a friend and neighbor. There is much more of this sort of work done than is dreamed of, and the late convention sought to solve the problem as to how it could be prevented, by recommending that postage on all first-class matter mailed on postal-cars be charged double rates. Our friends in Congress, however, told us that it would be perfectly useless to attempt such a thing, and that we had better find some other solution of the difficulty. After casting around it was about concluded to recommend that the *business* of post-offices be computed upon the amount of mail-matter *coming into them*, instead of that GOING OUT, and a Bill was drawn embodying that feature, but it was afterward feared that that might not be the best method, and so it has been held back.

It looks to us as the shortest road to obviate a wrong that an ungenerous public seems determined to inflict upon many postmasters, and during our coming visit to Washington we propose to look further into this subject and see if it is practicable.

## DON'T NEGLECT IT.

During the past week we met at the Grand Pacific Hotel, in this city, one of the leading members of Congress, a man who is not only a friend of House Bill No. 7,474, but also of the country postmasters. He said there was a good feeling in Congressional circles in regard to the postmasters' bill, and with *proper* urging it would pass. The most important thing to do at *this* time, he claimed, was to show that the *public approved* of the proposed increase in compensation, and the best way to *prove* it was by the *country press*. He said that every Congressman read his *home* paper when he had no time to read others, and was *guided* and *influenced* more by it ten times over, than by the large dailies, and that if we could secure good, ringing editorials in favor of the bill, there was no power that could prevent its passage. He regarded this as *imperative*, and said we could not urge this too strongly upon the attention of postmasters. He said, too, there was not a moment to be lost, and that if we proposed to win, we must go at this in dead earnest.

Men! brethren! Will you listen? Will you do this little thing? Will aid us thus much? Will you put your shoulder to the wheel and give this enterprise a *push?* We beg of you, for God's sake, to do it, and send us *marked* copies.

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A COPY of this issue should be *presented* to every country newspaper in America with certain articles *marked*, and they should be asked to give the 3d and 4th-class postmasters a strong, warm editorial indorsement in their efforts to secure Congressional action. It would have splendid effect as showing the drift of public sentiment in favor of our movement.

## THE POSTMASTERS' MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION.

The Postmasters' Mutual Benefit Association will prove a great success. One thousand application blanks were sent out November 11th, and up to this date, Nov. 16, over three hundred have been returned all properly filled out, and by the time this paper has gone to press, a charter will have been secured. No business, however, will be transacted, or money accepted, until we have 500 applications on file. *Then*, it will be a "go." *Then*, it will be a success. *Then*, it will have come to stay.

If we can secure 1,000 members before the first annual meeting in January, we will be satisfied, and shall be glad to turn over the office of Secretary to some able-bodied man who has the strength to manage the business. We took our position with the sole purpose of being the humble instrument of founding a great, good and beneficent institution, and we are as confident of success as we are that we live. There is no doubt about it. We confess we went into the enterprise against our inclinations. Not that we did not believe in it, for we do; but we did not think the postmasters wanted it just yet; but we are glad that we were mistaken, for now we *know* that they do.

## TO POSTMASTERS.

This edition of THE UNITED STATES MAIL has been arranged expressly to meet the wants of the public in its business relations with the post-office. It contains information of value and importance to every man who has any dealings with you, and what we have here presented can be found no where else, not even in the *Guide* in as clear and concise a form as is here given. And, besides, the *Guide* is not found much out of the large cities and costs too much money for the general public.

There is not a third or fourth-class postmaster in the country but who could use from 20 to 50 copies of this issue to advantage in circulating it in his community. It will have a tendency to right some wrongs and set the people to thinking.

This is our *holiday greeting!* We have omitted almost all the *news* features of the paper and have attempted to make it a compendium of postal literature, and it will answer hundreds of questions that are put to you almost daily.

We will fill orders for extra copies of this issue at the following rates: 20 copies, $1.00; 50 copies, $2.00; 100 copies, $3.50.

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THERE is not a post-office in the land but that would be benefited by the circulation of this issue of THE UNITED STATES MAIL among its patrons. We have produced a paper the like of which was never before given to the public. It gives information regarding postal laws and regulations in the most clear and concise manner and in a form the public will appreciate. Postmasters or their assistants who want to make some extra money, should order 100 copies and sell them out at 10 cents each. There is money in it.

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IF each postmaster in the United States would order ten copies of this issue, it would give us an edition of over a *half million*. Some who have seen *advanced proofs*, have ordered a hundred each.

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HOW about crowding THE UNITED STATES MAIL for 1887? Will you lend a helping hand? Remember that our interests are *one and the same!* We each depend upon the other.

## TO CONGRESSMEN.

The third and fourth-class postmasters of the land have placed their grievances in House Bill No. 7,474. It is now in the hands of the Post-Office Committee and we understand that it will be reported with a recommendation for passage.

You all no doubt know something of its provisions and we beg of you that you take it up for consideration.

The postmasters do not come to you as democrats or republicans, but as fellow-citizens who are officers of the Government, seeking relief from unjust and unfair discriminations. It is the first time in the history of the Government that any organized attempt has been made upon the part of postmasters to secure legislation in their own behalf, which fact we trust will not operate against them at this time, now that they have placed their grievances before you. While you legislated in the interest of the people in reducing letter postage, and were especially considerate to the press in cutting off 50 per cent. on second-class matter, yet the postmasters have been the sufferers, and we cannot believe that you would systematically legislate in the interest of the people and the press to their detriment. Almost every grade of postal officials have secured legislation except postmasters, and they have stood back waiting only for some one to make a move. They ask from you not sympathy, but pure and unadulterated *justice*.

## THE FIRST AND SECOND P. M'S.

We extend the compliments of the season to the postmasters of the *first* and *second* class. We feel sorry for them but we could not help it. Some of them are tip-top fellows and earn their salaries, but nine-tenths of them are no good and their offices would run just as well without them as with them. What an outrage upon decency, what a burlesque upon justice and right, that the men who perform little or no service receive the highest salaries and have all their expenses paid by the Government, while the poor 3d and 4th class fellows dig in and work like Turks for small pay and foot all expenses for rent, light, fuel and clerk hire! *Bah!* We do not understand why there is any *hesitation* upon the part of Congress to right this wrong. If it is not done this winter, there will be no one to blame but the postmasters themselves. Gentlemen! *waken up!* Grapple the Member from your district and never let him go until he promises to set you free from this load of injustice and inequality.

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DON'T you think you could get away with 50 or 100 copies of this issue very easily? Suppose you try it on. Every paper you gave away to the patrons of your office would make you a friend for life. We have endeavored to serve not only the postmasters this time, but the *public*. Such an array of postal information and literature was never before put upon the market. The prices we have announced are as low as we could stand, and receive any returns for our labor.

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NOW don't you deem it wise and prudent to send your member of Congress a copy of this issue, a *marked* one, at that? It would have a splendid effect and open well the way for our Committee in January. Do not depend upon some *other* P. M. to do it, but you take the bull by the horns and do it yourself.

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HOW would it do to flood the mails with THE UNITED STATES MAIL?

How do you like it?

Looks pretty well, don't it?

Some things improve with age.

The United States Mail will bear examination. Take it all in.

The Speaker of the House is a subscriber to The United States Mail.

This will be the last paper you will get if your time is out.

The first official act of the postmaster at Elmyra, N. Y., was to send $2.00 for The United States Mail for a year.

The Cincinnati *Enquirer* says a country post-office is a place of resort where news mongers assemble to whittle and spit.

No one in the postal service need have any hesitation about subscribing for The United States Mail.

Parties having correspondents in cities should address their letters plainly, giving *street* and *number*.

An old lady hearing somebody say that the mails were very irregular, said: 'It was just so in my young days—no trusting on 'em."

"Any letters for Mike Howe?" asked an individual of a clerk at a post-office delivery window. "No letters for *anybody's* cow," was the reply.

No Postmaster, or other privileged person, can authorize his assistant, clerk, or any person, to write his name for the purpose of franking any letter, public or private.

Penurious penmen of ample leisure are trying to see how many words a postal card will carry without slopping over. An Indianapolis insurance agent piled on one thousand.

The London *Era* says: "Every miserable little tradesman who owes a grudge, and every scoundrel who dare not say openly what he thinks, flies to the postal card to gratify a mean feeling of paltry revenge."

Mail matter bearing the correct post-office name and state, but the wrong *county*, should be sent to the post-office in the state named without any detention whatever.

Did it ever occur to you that the post-office is the greatest factor in our civilization? It even takes lead of the church and school-house! Cut off the free delivery, the registry system, the money order, the postal note, the railway post-office and the fast mail, and where would we be?

There is great neglect in postmasters failing to compel payment in advance for box rent. The sooner country people understand that a postmaster can have no discretion in the matter, the better it will be for all concerned.

A clerk in the Binghampton post-office heard a tap at the window of the ladies' department, when who should he find there but a man by the name of Drake, to whom he said: "Mr. Drake, you will please go the other side, this department is for ducks!"

It is the duty of the postmaster to require at least one quarter's rent in advance, before placing any one's mail in a post-office box. Failing to do this, the postmaster must charge himself in his quarterly return with the rent.

A mail bag is an epitome of human life.

Domestic letters upon which one full rate has not been paid must be held for postage.

A postmaster should never forward letters except upon the order of the person addressed.

Abraham Lincoln was once a country postmaster, with a salary of less than $90 a year.

The United States Mail is the only paper in the history of journalism which was fully *established* before it was published.

If all our *old* subscribers will come to the rescue and send us in *one* new subscriber each, we shall be happy.

On calling or sending for a letter known to have been *advertised*, the fact should always be stated, otherwise only the *current* letters examined.

The department has nothing to do with regard to the liabilities of those who receive papers from the office of publication to pay their subscriptions.

Don't you think you could use fifty copies of this issue to advantage among the patrons of your office? Suppose you try it on. It could be sent as your Christmas present.

People will be surprised to learn how little they know of postal affairs when they come to examine into the subject. A perusal of The United States Mail will be a sort of an eye-opener.

This is a decidedly fast age. Business methods are not what they used to be. Progress is the watchword of the hour, and yet, dear, gentle reader, the post-office has kept up with the times.

Among the necessary qualifications of aspirants for post-office positions, it is strictly enjoined that all persons applying must be able to write their names without sticking their tongues out. Don't forget it.

A certain postmaster, who had held his office some twenty-five years, was asked how he happened to retain his place during so many changes of administrations. He replied by saying that he didn't think that the administrations change any faster than he could change his politics.

A person receiving a letter from the post-office by mistake, or finding one in the street or elsewhere, can, under no pretense, designedly break the seal without subjecting himself to a severe penalty, the indorsement, "opened by mistake," being "too thin."

Letters stamped with one full rate of postage should be despatched, charged with the additional postage due; but where parties are in the habit of mailing packages when it is evident their intention is to relieve themselves of the prepayment of the proper postage, it is the duty of the postmaster to require the full rates to be pre-paid before mailing the package.

The young lady who acts as Assistant Postmaster at Westerville, Franklin County, Ohio, is named Emancipation Proclamation Coggshall. It is a pretty heavy load to carry, almost as much so as that of the wife of a certain postmaster in Pickaway County, Ohio, whose name before marriage was America Adelaide Victoria Bergstresser.

An Illinois postmaster gives notice that "hereafter everybody must lick their own postage stamps, for my tongue's give out."

No postmaster has any lawful right or authority to assign a post-office box to any person until the rent has been paid one-quarter in advance.

A postmaster in Virginia sent in his quarterly report, and added: "I hereby certify that the four going A count is as neer rite as I no how to make it. If there is enny mistake it is not dun on Purpose."

Dead letters are much more the result of negligence than of ignorance. If everybody would use Government request envelopes the Dead Letter Office could speedily wind up its business.

"Book manuscript" is a term no longer used in the postal law. Manuscripts, when accompanied by proof sheets and corrected proof sheets relating to it, can pass in the mails at third-class rates, but must be *unsealed*.

In determining the *weight* of packages deposited in a post-office for mailing, the rule is that if the package or letter or whatever it may be, bears down its end of the beam *below* an equilibrium, an additional rate should be charged.

While sitting in a country post-office lately watching the people call for mail, we were assured by the postmaster that not less than *seven persons*—father, mother and five children—had all, within thirty minutes, called for a letter for the head of the family.

An Eastern postmaster tried the experiment of placing a handsome young lady at the stamp window as stamp clerk, and the result was an increase of sales of some $400 in one month. We believe Springfield, Mass., was the place where the experiment was tried.

Post-office Clerk.—"Here! your letter is overweight."

Pat.—"Over what weight?"

P. O. C.—"It's too heavy; put another stamp on it."

Pat.—"Och, git out wid yer foolin'! Sure if I put another stamp on, won't it be heavier still?"

A detective can not be considered as an officer of any court, unless he produces a regular mandate of the court. Unless such mandate is produced a postmaster will abide by the ruling of the Department, that "a postmaster is not required to disclose knowledge obtained in the discharge of his official duties unless called upon by legal process of law by the mandate of a court."

Many merchants and business men are in the habit of holding their letters to the moment of the advertised closing of the mails. This is a great mistake. Letters should be mailed as early as possible, and particularly when sent in large quantities. The time advertised for the closing of the mails is just the exact time the mail pouches are *locked* and ready for shipment; therefore letters should be in the post-office from 30 to 45 minutes in advance of the closing time (the earlier the better), in order to allow for the stamping and distribution processes, before the mail pouch is reached.

## FOR BUSINESS MEN.

### Specially Prepared by "The United States Mail."

1. The postage on a pair of boots would be at the rate of one cent an ounce.

2. Clothing is classed as merchandise and can be mailed only at the rate of one cent an ounce.

3. Letter heads, bill heads and envelopes, blank or printed, are charged as merchandise and postage must be paid at the rate of one cent an ounce.

4. Every business man should use return request envelopes in all his correspondence. If everybody used them the dead letter office would soon wind up its business.

5. Deposit as much of your correspondence at as early an hour in the day as possible. By so doing you get the benefit of out-going afternoon and early evening mails, and you avoid the mistakes of distributors made during the evening *rush*.

6. In all your correspondence, whenever it can be done, give the *street* and *number* as well as *county* and *state*. This saves much time and is a sure preventive against errors of delivery. It is much better to spell the name of the state in full.

7. If you write a letter and address it incorrectly, or if it cannot be delivered to the party addressed, by having your business card on the envelope you insure its return to you. Otherwise it will go to the dead letter office.

8. Wedding cake can only be mailed when packed in a tin or wooden box. Confectioneries the same.

9. It will be of great benefit to business men for them to consult our table of *Domestic Postage*.

10. Every counting room should be supplied with scales for weighing letters.

11. A newspaper is not forwarded in the mails unless postage is *fully prepaid*, so don't think you can beat Uncle Sam by attaching a one cent stamp when *two* are required.

12. A postal card is not mailable with any writing or printing on the address side, except the *address*, nor with anything pasted or pinned to the other side.

13. There are thousands of little articles now sent by express which can be more safely, quickly and carefully carried by mail if *registered*. The fee is only ten cents in addition to the postage.

14. No valuable package should ever be mailed unless it is *registered*. Don't forget this.

15. Nothing is received for mailing that weighs over four pounds, except in case of a single book, as for example, a bible, a dictionary, or history.

16. If you wanted to send a suit of clothes by mail which weigh six pounds, you would have to make two packages of it.

17. Don't forget that all parcels deposited for mailing must be so wrapped that they can be examined without destroying the wrapper, otherwise *letter rates* of postage are charged.

18. Now that the holidays are near at hand, it will be well for the general public to examine into the subject of *third* and *fourth*-class postage. Don't be foolish and make contributions to the dead letter office.

19. Photographs are third-class matter but *photographic albums* are rated as merchandise and belong to the fourth.

20. An autograph album can be mailed at third-class rates, but if it contains any autographs, it would be subject to letter postage.

21. Tea, coffee, sugar and kindred articles can be mailed at the rate of one cent an ounce.

22. Send no *cash money* by mail. It is much safer and cheaper in the long run to buy a money order or postal note.

23. Any person who sends money or jewelry in an *unregistered* letter, not only runs the risk of losing his property, but places needless temptation before persons who might not otherwise be tempted to commit a felony.

24. Postmasters are not obliged to accept coin or currency so mutilated as to be uncurrent. Don't try and get all your old, worn out bills upon them.

25. Never ask a postmaster for credit for postage stamps, envelopes or box rents. He is not allowed to grant it.

26. Third and fourth-class matter can be mailed in the *same package*, provided it does not exceed four pounds in weight, but it subjects the entire package to fourth-class rates.

27. Chromos, engravings or lithographs belong to the third class, and can be sent at the rate of two ounces for one cent.

28. Books, pamphlets and music can be sent at third-class rates.

29. In sending packages of the third or fourth class, be sure and write your name on it, as coming from you and give your *street* and *number*, so that if it is undelivered it may be returned to you.

30. Never write an address on a letter or any kind of a package intended for mailing, in a careless manner.

31. Never use envelopes made of *thin* paper in order to save postage, especially when the enclosures are of several pieces of paper. Being often handled and subject to much pressure, such envelopes often split open and lose their contents.

32. Poisons, explosives or inflamable articles are not received for mailing, no matter how carefully wrapped.

33. Animals, reptiles, live or dead, (not stuffed) insects, except queen bees when safely secured, are excluded from the mails.

34. Bank checks or drafts can not be accepted *in lieu* of money when purchasing a money order.

35. Two or more families, or persons or firms, can not club together and rent a post-office box. They are inteded *only* for one person, family or firm. Persons *temporarily* visiting your family, however, can receive their mail through you.

36. A postal note is good only three months from the last day of the month of issue. For example, a postal note issued in Cincinnati on Cleveland on the 15th day of December, 1886, would be good until March 31, 1887.

37. Postal notes are payable to bearer, but the person presenting it is compelled to receipt it. He is not required to identify himself.

38. When mail matter is once deposited in a post-office or in a street letter box, it is beyond the control of the person putting it there.

39. The delivery of mail is not controlled by any statutory provision, but by the rules and regulations of the Department, and the object is to insure and facilitate such delivery to the proper persons; so that the general public should not feel that in enforcing precautions to secure correct delivery, the post-office department is doing *more* than its duty.

40. The rules and regulations of the post-office department are not intended to embarrass and exclude legitimate correspondence, but only that which is criminal and unlawful.

41. The money-order system is a wonderful public convenience, intended to secure safety in the transfer of *small sums* of money through the mails. The principal means employed to attain safety is in leaving out of the order the name of the *payee* or the person for whom the money is intended.

42. The issue of a money order on credit is strictly prohibited, under the severest penalties. No postmaster should ever be expected to thus lay himself liable to criminal prosecution.

43. There is nothing in the postal law prohibiting a "dun" or threat of prosecution being sent by mail.

44. A postal is regarded as unmailable if it has anything pasted or attached to it, but it can be forwarded if a sufficient amount of postage is affixed.

45. Postal cards issued by private parties are subject to letter rates when they contain any written matter in addition to the *date* and *address*.

46. When any person is annoyed or *expects* to be annoyed by postal cards sent from any particular place or from any known place, he may direct the postmaster at the point named *to destroy all postal cards addressed to him*, and the same request may be made to the receiving postmaster.

47. "Unclaimed letters enclosed in envelopes upon which hotel cards are printed, should not be returned to the mailing office unless such envelopes have written or printed thereon the words 'return to,' in addition to the hotel card."

48. A printed letter which does not bear internal evidence that it is being sent to several persons in identical terms, when sent by one person, is subject to letter rates. For example, we could not send the Postmaster-General a *printed* private letter and send it at *third*-class rates but would have to pay letter postage.

49. A book presented for mailing with a letter attached to it would subject the entire package to *letter rates*.

50. An unclaimed postal card is not returned to the writer, even though his address is given upon it, but is sent to the dead letter office.

51. Postal cards that have been split open and written upon the inside are unmailable.

52. Postal cards are handled with as much care and promptness in the matter of *dispatch* and *delivery* as though they were letters, even though the matter therein is printed.

53. A box with its lid nailed on is held as being closed against inspection and is therefore subject to *letter-rates*. Postmasters have no right to pry open such a box and then nail it up again. Even if they had the *right* to do so, they have not the *time*.

54. Written visiting cards are regarded as first-class matter and subject to letter rates. If printed they can be sent at the rate of one cent for each two ounces; that is, if the card is of an imbellished design.

55. Insurance policies, whether canceled or not, are first-class matter if they contain any writing.

56. A letter-press copy book with copies of written letters therein, is first-class matter.

57. A tax bill, a receipt, an abstract of title, a power of attorney, a promissory note, a mortgage, a draft or check, canceled checks, coupons, an invoice bill, a statement, a pension voucher, a telegraphic dispatch, a bank note or any document with writing upon it, is subject to letter rates.

58. In making a present of a book it is permissible to write an inscription or dedication upon the cover or one of the blank leaves, but it must not contain anything that partakes of personal correspondence.

59. In sending one, two, three or four articles of the fourth class, or, in fact, any number of articles up to four pounds, you can indicate on such package the names of the articles enclosed. You can also write upon or attach to any such articles, by tag or label, a mark or number, name or letter, for purposes of identification.

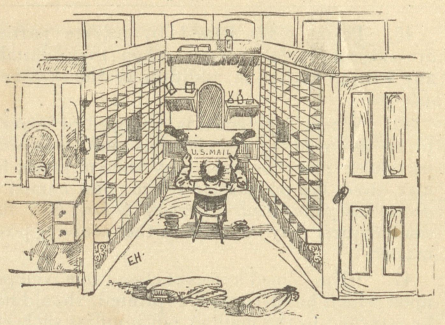
60. All manuscript matter designed for publication in books, magazines, periodicals or newspapers, is subject to *letter postage* unless accompanied by proof sheets of the same. Manuscript music is rated in the same manner.

61. Matter enclosed in a *sealed* envelope, though the corners may be cut or the ends notched, is subject to *letter rates*.

62. Sheet music is third-class matter.

63. By a late ruling of the Department blank checks and drafts have been changed from the fourth to the third class.

64. If you are smart and "up to snuff," you will send $2.00 for THE UNITED STATES MAIL for one year and thus keep posted in regard to postal affairs.



THE HOUR OF EASE.

## SCENES IN RURAL POST OFFICES.

The country post-office is a great place. It is visted daily by almost every inhabitant. The matter of getting a letter or a newspaper out of it never enters into their calculations, their one solitary idea being simply to go there and inquire and receive the same old answer: "*No, nothing!*" You see the post-office belongs to the young and old, the rich and poor, the white and black and to those who get mail and to those who don't, and those who average one letter a year think just as much of it as those who receive twenty a day.

Did you ever spend a day in a country post-office? No! I sat behind a big glass case with the postmaster, and, as we sat and chatted, girls and boys came trooping in asking for letters for "our folks." The postmaster was urbanity personified, and with a smile he would say again and again, "Nothing to-day for you." "Do you know that some of these children's parents, to my certain knowledge, haven't had a letter in three years? And yet they come here every mail without fail, and chirp out, 'If you please, sir, anything for our folks?' And do you suppose they are dismayed after a year's continued daily inquiries? Not at all! Day after day they bob up serenely, and it makes but little difference whether President elect Cleveland enforces the civil service programme, the 'our folks' will be on hand regularl at the distribution of every mail, and they will not be dismayed if they do not receive even a circular for four years to come."

Many postmasters are subjected to the annoyance of unruly crowds of boys who congregate in the post-office in great throngs and cut up high shines. They claim to be waiting for the mails to be distributed, and while that is going on they hoop, yell and fight and play and drum on the doors and windows, and even on the boxes, and render themselves a general nuisance, not only to the postmaster but also the public In some instances their parents, even, can not control them, and the young rascals have to be taken in by the authorities.

We wish to say now to all who have written THE UNITED STATES MAIL for information touching their rights in such matters, that they should *first* notify the parents of such boys as to their bad conduct, and then if it is repeated, swear out a warrant for their arrest on the charge of disturbing the peace, and have them fined. If that don't break it up, slip out your back door and come in the front way and knock them right and left with a big stuffed club. As a last resort, report them to the Chief Post-office Inspector, and by the time the boys are arrested and carried off one or two hundred miles to the nearest United States court, they will conclude that "raising the devil in the post-office" is not a paying business.

There is no question but that every live postmaster in the land is a regular reader of THE UNITED STATES MAIL, and that they derive much comfort and pleasure in perusing its pages. When "the hour of ease" arrives, he lays himself back in his big office chair, and getting his feet higher than his head, he takes his favorite paper and has a royal feast. He never tires of the good things set before him, for it is a source not only of comfort and consolation, but of strength to nerve him to his daily task.

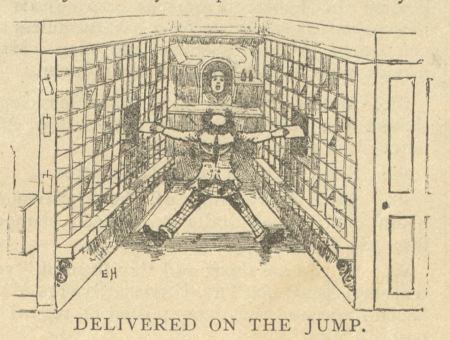
Oh, Lord! how some postmasters have to fairly *jump* to wait upon their patrons after the mails are distributed and office is opened. Everybody outside is in a hurry. They *know* there is a letter in there for them and they will *die* unless they get within a minute or two. They act as if its contents would be utterly lost unless the letter is pla ed within their hands before Sam Jones gets his newspaper, and they crowd and push to get up to the general delivery, and yell for mail as if the P. M. was deaf.

This poor bald-headed fellow is trying to wait upon two at a time, and he will continue to be that foolish until he delivers the wrong letter, some day, and then he will wish that he hadn't been so anxious to serve the "dear public." But even if he don't commit any blunders of that kind, he may get his arms out of joint, or he may work himself to death.

Just look at the poor devil when his rapid delivery is over! He is almost used up and is an object of commiseration. His pet poodle sits there before him and weeps at his discom fiture and wonders what it all means. The fact is, the outside world knows but little of the real labor incident to properly conduct a post-office, and it has no idea of the perplexities surrounding a postmaster who is honestly trying to do his duty.

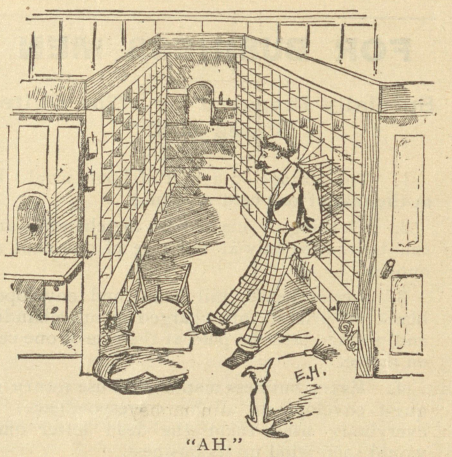
Still, the post-office is the focal point in every community and everybody wants to be the postmaster. They think it fun to run work for Uncle Sam in the handling of the mails, but if they knew of the trials and troubles of such a position, they would have none of it.

WHEN SCHOOL IS OVER.



DELIVERED ON THE JUMP.

THE applications on file at the Department for postmasterships number over 300,000, and the papers relating to them weigh over three tons and fill two rooms, full.



"AH."

## HINTS FROM THE POSTMASTER.

When you call at the office for your mail, and the postmaster hands it out, ask him if that is all.

If you ask for mail, and he tells you there is none, tell him there ought to be, then go home and send the rest of the family around to ask at different times through the day.

Don't bring your mail to the office until the mail closes, then curse the postmaster for not opening the mail-bag and putting your letter in.

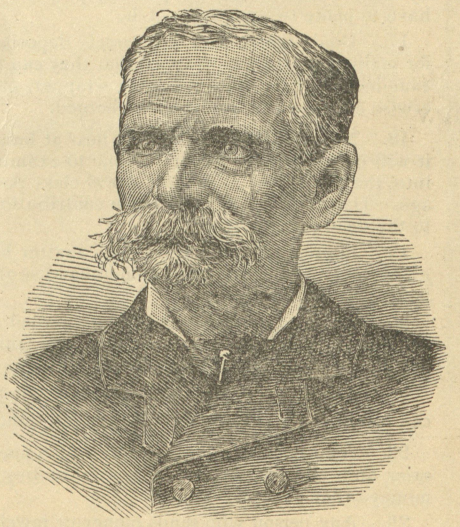
When you want a stamp on your letter, tell the postmater to put it on; if he don't like it, lick him. In case you put it on yourself, soak it in your mouth long enough to remove the mucilage; it will then stick until it is dry.

Be sure and ask the postmaster to credit you for stamps; if he has any accommodation about him he will do it.

If you have a box, stand and drum on it until the postmaster hands out your mail; it makes him feel good, especially if he is waiting on somebody else.

## "BLACK BART," THE CELEBRATED MAIL ROBBER.

The portrait here given is a life-like representation of "Black Bart," the celebrated mail robber of California, now doing eight years at the penitentiary at San Quenten, in that State. It was engraved especially for THE UNITED STATES MAIL, from a photograph furnished by the Post-office Department two years ago, and appeared in the first number of this paper ever issued. Three pages were necessary to tell of his exploits and capture, and then the story was hardly touched upon. It was as interesting as a blood-and-thunder novel.



"BLACK BART."

## MANY DEAD LETTERS.

### UNCLE SAM DESTROYS OVER 1,000 OF THEM PER DAY.

The dead-letter office has become the most interesting, if not the most important, branch of the postal service. It was established in 1825.

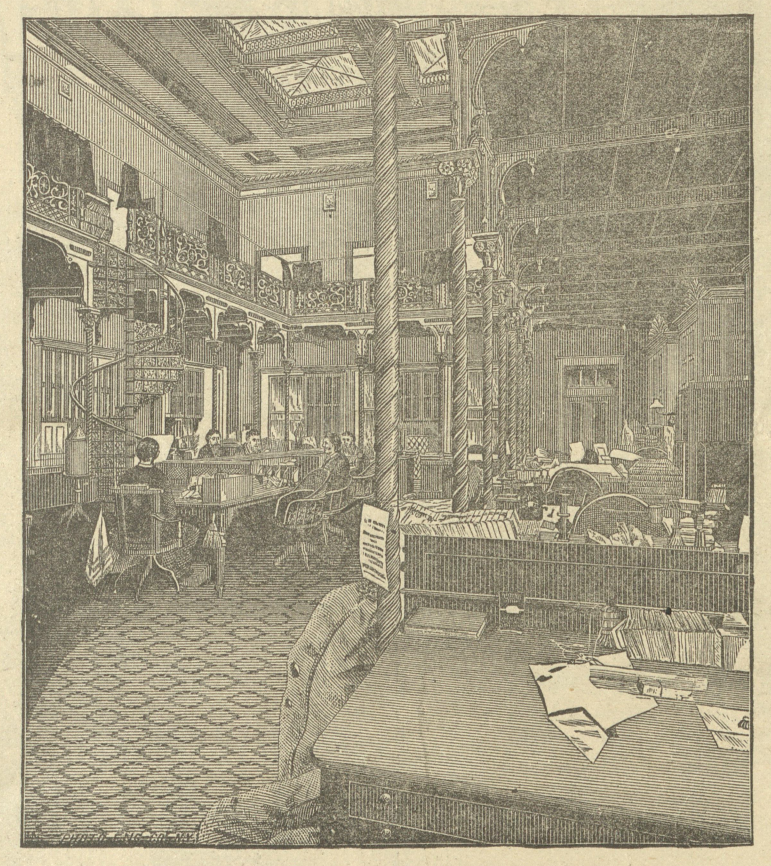
During the last year there was received at the office an average of nearly 15,000 letters daily, or a total of about 5,000,000. These have been handled by 120 employees, mostly women. The dead letters are classified as "ordinary" and "unmailable," the latter being such as do not have a sufficient address, or which contain prohibitory matter. Misdirected letters will average 1,000 a day, and letters which have no address at all 1,000 a month. It is an astonishing fact that the greater per cent. of the latter contain money. Of the domestic letters opened the past year about 40,000 contained money, drafts, checks and money-orders amounting to about $1,500,000. Nearly 70,000 contained postage stamps. Every opened letter containing an enclosure of value is carefully recorded, and those for which no owner can be found are filed away, subject to reclamation within four years. When the writer's name is attached to a valuable letter he is informed of the money being detained, and by satisfactory proof is able to secure it.

A lady has charge of the misdirected letters. If possible they are sent to the persons they are intended for. So proficient has this lady become that she is as well acquainted with the names of cities, villages and streets as the average schoolboy is acquainted with A B C. At her desk she has railway guides, directories and books containing the names of newspapers, bankers, ministers, and the streets of all the large cities in the United States to aid her in forwarding letters to the proper person, city or State. A letter was recently directed to "110 C street, Nashville, Tenn." It was returned to the dead-letter office. At once the lady knew that the party addressed resided in Washington, as there is but one "C" street in the United States, and that is in that city. The letter was delivered and the party to whom it was sent was found. In directing it the writer had placed the name of his own city upon the envelope—a common error. Often times the lady is required to guess at the address; and in no place can a woman improve her faculty for guessing more than right here. She is not required to guess like the Englishman occupying a similar position in the department of Great Britain. A letter was received at that office directed, "My son, up three flights of stairs, London." To-day a letter came to the department at Washington addressed to "Wine Dock." The name of the town to which the letter was sent is Wyandotte.

"When it is impossible to forward a letter without opening, it is opened and read by a young lady, and the address of the writer being obtained, is returned. One young lady can open about 1,000 of these letters a day. The majority of eastern letters thus opened are characterized by vulgarity, while the majority of western epistles show the finer feelings of the writers. When there are no signatures the letters are cast aside and sold as waste paper."

So "your darling," "your own pet," "lovingly, Laura," and "eternally yours, George," if you do not hear from your epistles possibly they are in some paper mill and eagerly perused by girl employees.

Parcels by the thousand are also received at the dead-letter office. A large proportion of the most valuable are addressed to foreign countries, and are detained because they contain dutiable goods or exceed the limit of size or weight. In all such cases, if the name of the sender does not appear, the addressee is notified that the package will be forwarded by express at his expense or returned to the sender, if his address is furnished. Articles received which can neither be delivered or returned to the sender are sold annually at auction, and the proceeds are deposited in the treasury.



INTERIOR OF THE DEAD LETTER OFFICE.

## CHRISTMAS DEAD LETTERS.

I went through the Dead Letter Office of the the Post-office Department the other day. I am rather sorry I did, although I have always wanted to look into its mysteries; but I ought not to have gone at Christmas time. If it had not been for the coolness and calmness of Major Dallas, the chief of the office, who is not easily affected by such things, the water would have stood in my eyes several times as I looked at Christmas packages that had been turned from the general current of the mails into the stagnant pool. It was really quite touching to see, after passing through the museum into the large room where the "dead" letters and packages are opened, letter after letter cut open by the dextrous hand of the expert clerk at the rate of 1,600 a day, each with its little message of love and cheer. Here was a little money, there a Christmas card or a souvenir in hair-work—all were full of Christmas spirit. At side tables sat other skilful clerks opening and cataloguing the misdirected or unstamped or unclaimed packages. Many of these had the Christmas flavor; they held all sorts of pretty things. One which touched me contained simply a fleecy pair of white hand-knit soft wool mittens and a Christmas card. Another was more elaborate. It contained a plush bag, cigar-case, pocket-book, and a half dozen other gifts, together with the inevitable Christmas card. But enough. The museum of the Dead Letter Office is a small room, of which three walls are covered with cases containing odd things sent to the office as improperly mailed or entirely unmailable. Almost anything you can imagine of a queer sort is here, from Guiteau's photograph to a patent hitching post. The oddest thing in the Dead Letter Office is the carelessness of letter writers as there exhibited. It seems improbable that last year 1,300 letters containing articles of value, were received at the Dead Letter Office containing nowhere within or without either the name of the sender or the person to whom sent. It's a fact, though, and only one of a dozen other strange facts. Nor does the carelessness here brought to light appear to be at all on the decrease. The gross receipts of undelivered mail-matter last year were 4,751,872, or more than 8 per cent. increase over the year. Of course the office manages, by its improved methods, to get much of this matter either to the people who mailed it or to the people for whom it was intended. But there is a great deal that never gets any further than the city of Washington. Some of the things are sold at auction, which occurs every winter.—*Philadelphia Record.*

## GIVE THE FULL ADDRESS.

### OR YOU ARE LIKELY TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO THE ALREADY LARGE COLLECTION IN THE POST-OFFICE MUSEUM.

To prove that many thousands of our people disregard the implicit instructions laid down by the Post-office Department to the effect that you must 'give the full directions in all cases, and thereby insure certain transmission of the matter mailed," note the following imperfect inventory of the articles now on exhibition in the post-office museum. The absent-minded traveler can find there his forgotten satchel; the negligent mechanic of whatever branch of trade can find his tools; the gossipy washerwoman, her wash-board. Those who have lost umbrellas and parasols—and their name is legion—can observe here the heretofore absent parachute; the naturalist can revel in snakes, alligators, bugs and horned toads; the dude or fair girl can see the gold watch or diamond ring he or she has longed for; the geologist can be carried into the bowels of the earth, so to speak, by gazing to his heart's content upon a very fine collection of minerals and precious stones.

The anatomist or tragedian can study the human skull divine or mouth. The entomologist can wear his life away by cogitating upon the variegated coloring and indiscribable shape of the dried butterfly; the duelist, or would-be murderer, can examine the different kinds of pistols, and the young lady of tidy-like frame of mind can have her "crewel" soul stirred by the sight of needlework which surpasses masculine comprehension. The end man can look upon his favorite instrument, the tambourine; the timid one can look with feelings of inexpressible bliss on the centennial hoofed creature denominated centipede, and the art student can lose himself in contemplating a fine array of pictures. Those persons interested in bottled liquids—and they are numerous—can see it all. Any one who is gone on ceramics can look upon various specimens of pottery; the aged and the fop can gaze on all kinds of cones; the archæologist can twist his mind out of shape by investigating Chinese manuscript. Herr Most or any other invincible, nihilistical glass bomb thrower can observe, with fiendish delight, a package of fire crackers and several boxes of percussion caps and matches. Telegraphers and meteorologists can look upon and examine the many receivers and thermometers; the photographer can be pleased by the innumerable array of photographs displayed. One of the most peculiar sights to be seen is a collection consisting of a saddle, stirrups, bridle, halter, bit, whip, and hitching-post. The horse and jockey are looked for in every mail.—*Washington Republican.*

## "THE FAST MAIL IN NORTH CAROLINA."

If the reader will call to mind the speed of some of the fast mail trains in the North as they whiz by in a cloud of smoke, shaking the very earth by their tremendous velocity, and then look upon the picture presented in this issue of THE UNITED STATES MAIL, the two distinct civilizations in this country will become very apparent.

Our colored friend who carries the mail in North Carolina has stopped on his route for refreshments, and after partaking of them, has lain down for repose. His mule does not appear to be sharing in the repast, or to have done so, but stands waiting patiently to resume the journey. While he sleeps complacently in the forest, the people go on, in their usual quiet way, not caring whether the mails are late or whether they come at all.

## THE DEAD-PRAYER OFFICE.

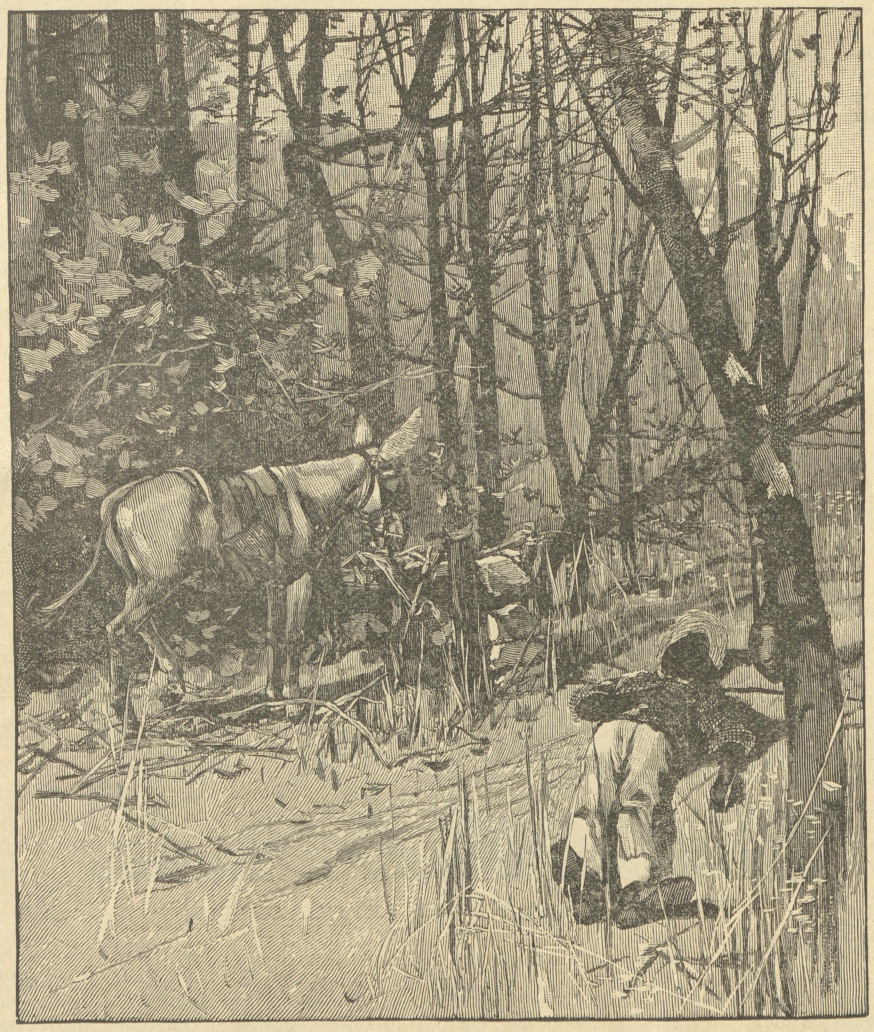
What becomes of all the unanswered letters? Thousands of them find their way to the dead-letter office. Some never reach the person for whom they are intended, because the postage is not paid; some fail because they are directed to the wrong office; some cannot be sent because the address is illegible; and some because the matter enclosed is unmailable. These float through the mails, are examined at the different offices, marked "mis-sent," and finally they fall into the dead-letter office. There they are opened and read, and if valuable are forwarded; if not, they are given to the flames. Such is the accuracy and skill of the postal officials that valuable letters never fail of reaching their destination.

Some prayers never reach God because they are not addressed to God's office. They are directed to the audience. Here one prays a "sharp cut" to some stubborn brother, or rebukes some error in theology to another, or drives some keen-edged blade of censure into another, directs a criticism to some who are running into fashionable follies, and sometimes (shame on us) the very supplication, which we offer in tenderest tones, in behalf of the weeping widow and helpless orphans, is intended more for those who kneel in mourning before us than for God who sits in glory above us. God's office is not in our neighbor's care, and if we direct our prayers to that point, they will certainly go to the "dead-prayer" office.

Again, there is prayer upon which the address is illegible—not because it is a rough, scrawling "hand-write;" these can always be deciphered, but because it has so many flourishes. This prayer is uttered in a pompous, grandiloquent style. It is full of long words, scientific terms and classical quotations. The very writing on the envelope is very much in keeping with the style upon the inside. The ink was fancy and it soon faded; the pen was the tongue, and it did not set the color in the prayer. How different when indicted by the heart! It is no wonder that this prayer gets lost, and finds its way into the "dead-prayer" office.

The last prayer we notice is the unavailable prayer. There is a great latitude allowed us in the postal matter of our Government, but there are a few things which cannot even get into the mail bags. Sharp edged tools and corroding acids, no matter how securely wrapped, will not be transported through the mails; these are put in a separate box and sent to the "dead-letter office," or they are captured by the first Postmaster that handles them. Many of our prayers, if answered, might be blessings to us, but they would fall like a shower of daggers upon our neighbors. Sometimes in our prayers we halfway complain of the strange providence which has befallen us, and argue the case with God; then the prayer is full of sharp-pointed arrows. Is it at all strange that kind answers are not returned? The corroding acid of selfishness or sensuality or pride is sometimes in our prayer. Such a prayer is lost on the way. It is poured out in mid-air. It is never answered, and well for us that it is not.

No legally "stamped," sincerely directed, and well meaning prayer is ever lost, when once deposited in the mail bags of heaven and started on its journey to the Lord. Locked within the "pouch" of His promises its "seal" will never be broken until it has reached the "post-office" in God's eternal kingdom. The answer may be delayed, but the prayer is "on file." Let us do away with the "dead-prayer" office by becoming true, genuine followers of the Postmaster-General of Heaven.—*Dr. Talmage.*



"THE FAST MAIL IN NORTH CAROLINA."

## LAW IN OMAHA.

Chicago Girl—Oh! do let me see the love-letter you got this morning, won't you?

Omaha Girl—I was afraid, dear, someone would get hold of it, so I burned it.

"Burned a love-letter?"

"Oh! don't suppose I do not know every line there was in it. I read and reread it until the words were engraven on my heart."

"What a goose you are! You couldn't hand in your heart as evidence in a breach-of-promise suit."—*Omaha World.*

## NEWSPAPER POSTAGE.

Newspapers are now carried by the Government at the rate of one cent a pound. It costs the Government fifteen cents a pound for this service, hence every newspaper is assisted by the Government to the amount of fourteen cents for every pound of its paper it sends out through the mails. There is no public outcry raised against this fraud—for it is a fraud on the people—because newspapers don't or won't see the injustice of it. It is claimed that as newspapers disseminate intelligence and are in a certain sense public educators, that there is nothing improper in their being fostered and encouraged at the public expense. All of which might be in a certain extent true if all papers had the high and holy mission of improving the condition of the people. But now notice that the papers which have an immense circulation, and get the greatest share of the benefits of these cheap rates are not those noted for their high and moral tone, but rather for its conspicuous absence. The sensational literary weeklies, the illustrated records of crime, frailties and follies, and the "snap" ventures that prey upon human gullibility are enabled to distribute their vile poison in every community, because of this generous co-operation of the Government. The law which gives country papers the right of transportation in their own counties free of charge is a good one, because a country paper does a good public service in developing the place in which it is published. It renders valuable service for all the favors it receives, and its work is up-hill business at the best. But see the effect of this one-cent rate on the country newspapers. The weeklies in the large cities with the item of postage practically removed, can kill the business of the local paper, and they are doing it. The country papers should wake up and protect themselves. The cent a pound rate is a monstrous iniquity, although in saying so we act against our own interests. No public money should be paid out for advancing private interests. The pound rate does this, and it is therefore wrong.

## THE COUNTRY POSTMASTER.

The postmaster is apt to be one of the leading, or at least one of the most trustworthy, men of the community in which he lives. As a rule the appointments are made in accordance with the expressed desire of a majority of the patrons of the office, and, in many cases, the postmaster, under Republican rule, held office through several Presidential terms. The postmaster of the fourth-class office is as well known as any member of the community in which he lives. He is the servant of the public, and is more often than otherwise the favorite of the public. No man who holds office is held to so strict an account as the postmaster, and no other official in the civil service is closer to the people or more people, than he.

Hence the convention to-day will be made up of reputable men, who, in urging in the claims of their offices, are really urging the claims of the people.

The offices in the smaller towns call for more work proportionately than is done in larger offices, and the movement to have these smaller offices better provided for is in the nature of practical civil service reform.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

## "A QUIET READING."

The illustration upon this page is very suggestive. The young lady before you is supposed to have received a letter from one she loves, and in order to enjoy it fully, to drink in all its sweet words of confidence and affection, she seeks a quiet retreat away from the household, and there breaks the seal and lets her eyes and heart enjoy the feast undisturbed. How natural this is, especially with women. They are more eager, more devoted, more loving and far more true, than men, and when a message of love comes to them through the mails, they hurry off to enjoy "A Quiet Reading."

The artist has done well his part. Poetic fancy and true artistic skill have created a fine result, and THE UNITED STATES MAIL is happy to present such a creation upon its page.

## HOME LETTERS.

Alas! it is only too easy a dozen times a week, and in every variety of circumstance, to be selfish, unsociable or indolent. It is selfish not to be willing to put ourselves out of the way to help and gratify those who are willing enough to help us, and who, when they write to us, of course expect us to answer them. It is unsocial never to dare to interchange a single idea with relatives, or neighbors, or friends. It is indolence that refuses the expenditure of a little time and trouble to remind distant kinsfolk that we still belong to each other, and that we think it worth while to be at the pains of writing a letter, though we may have nothing very special to say. The secret of all this is to have a kind heart, and to be willing to please and to add to each other's happiness.

Have you a sick sister, whose lonely life has but few bright clouds in it? Now and then make her feel that she is not utterly forgotten by the friend and companion of her happy childhood.

Is there a servant, retired from your service, who has nursed your children, been a kind and true friend to you in sad and dark hours, who is growing old, as yourself will some day grow old, with few changes in a dull life, and few pleasures in a poor one? Occasionally send a message to that dear friend, if not always in your hand, by your wife or child.

It will stir thoughts of slumbering happiness in a kind heart that has loved you with a love as good as a rich man's love, and served you with a service that no wages could repay. Or have you aged parents, living far away, it may be, in some remote home, whose monotonous and ever shortening life is never so pleasantly broken as by news of you; whose midnight thoughts and noonday musings are ever full of you; who grow young and brave in the thought of your success, and whose constant prayers have much more to do with it than you know of? Never let them feel that you are too busy to think of them, or too important to care for them. You will not have them much longer; but regularly make time to write. Make the evening of their lives sweet and mellow like a summer eve by the loving letters you may send them. Oh, how precious are home letters! They have the stamp of heaven.—*Dr. Talmage.*

A QUIET READING

## THE POST-OFFICE.

No one of the Executive Departments ministers so effectually to the every-day wants of the people as the General Post-office. By opening channels of communication between widely separated communities, and by the rapid dissemination of information adapted to instruct the masses, it becomes a highly valuable instrumentality for advancing the public virtue and intelligence. Its influence in promoting the civilization of new settlements is only surpassed by that of the pulpit, the school house and the press, whose issues it circulates. Wherever the mail carriers, with their instructive packets, make their appearance, law and order gradually supersede the rude customs and the violence of savage life. By means of the rapid interchange of thought which postal intercourse effects, the most distant portions of the body politic are closely united and firmly cemented. Besides the convenience to individuals and families resulting from its agency, the commercial prosperity of a nation is potently advanced by a well regulated postal establishment. Further, its tendencies to break down the barriers interposed between nations by ignorance and non-intercourse, through the enlarged political thought and records of social progress which it transmits from one to the other are of inestimable value. In short, whether viewed in its influences upon families, communities or States, the Post-office is entitled to be regarded as an immense benefactor. Its mission is one exclusively of peace and good will, and prosperity and happiness. Let us, then, extend our civilization and our influence by sustaining the postal system of the country and give it a liberal and generous support.—*James A. Garfield.*

## LOVE LETTERS.

Some one was saying the other day that the art of writing love letters was a lost art. If so, it must be that love has gone rather out of fashion. It seems to us that whoever loves will naturally write an irreproachable love letter, if he allows his pen to report the emotions of his heart. To be sure, there are those prudent lovers who never put anything upon paper—that is anything in particular—not exactly because they expect to be sued for a breach of promise some fine day, but because it is unsafe, and letters run a great risk, pass through innumerable hands, and pretty phrases and endearments are too precious to be endangered; others regard their emotions as too sincere and divine to be written out, and are afraid, perhaps, that they will savor of exaggeration; while others would like to express a great deal, but their thoughts fly awkwardly from the pen, and seem to lose half their significance. Many who can talk love and nonsense by the yard, lose their facility the instant they touch a pen; they need the electric presence of the object of inspiration, the retort, the response, or they write an essay, instead of a love letter; others, again, can produce the most gushing specimens of the art, but are dumb before the shrine. Of course the love letter which would seem like a drop of distilled honey to one recipient, would appear cold and calculated to another; one will idealize even the baldest possible expressions till they seem to shine with the radiance of love itself, will say all the writer would have to say if he knew how; while to her neighbor the sweetest words will not suffice to fill the measure of her expectations and imagination, since she always anticipates something sweeter than human thought can frame. There are those who like to read from their love letters to a curious or envious audience; and others—a few—like Hawthorne, who wrote to his wife: "Your letters are too sacred to be read in the midst of people. I never read them," he adds, "without first washing my hands." One would hardly care for them if she could not boast of their possession and advertise it; another feels that they are almost too personal and dear to mention, and learns the contents by heart, as if they were so many poems, as indeed they are to her experience. The love letter must not be too long, nor yet too short, but of that just measure that the reader shall always wish there were yet a little more, if only a postscript; and it should be of that quality which suggests such lovely and tender thoughts and on a second perusal one is surprised to find that they are not expressed in so many words, so certain was she that they originated with the writer. The loveliest of all love letters, however, are those between husband and wife. As long as they continue, there will be no room for the serpent to enter. They are the bulwark of the home and the safety of life itself. Let them multiply as the leaves of the forest and shine as the stars in the heavens. The mail bags cannot be too heavily loaded with such loving missives. They are the salt of the earth.—*Rose Elizabeth Cleveland.*

## HOW THE REDUCTION OF POSTAGE REDUCED THE SALARIES OF POSTMASTERS.

It is well known that the salaries of postmasters are based upon the aggregate receipts of their offices. These recepts in offices of the third and fourth classes, consist almost entirely of moneys arising from the sale of stamps, stamped envelopes, postal cards and the rental of post-office boxes. It will be readily seen, therefore, that any reduction in the general rate of postage could not fail to result in the lowering of salaries based upon receipts of postage in almost the exact proportion by which the rate is lessened. It has been the settled policy of Congress to provide the people with the amplest postal facilities at the smallest possible expense, and reduction in postage has been the order of the day, the letter rate having been reduced from 3 to 2 cents, while the unit weight has been advanced from a half to an ounce. Then, in still further pursuance of this line of action, the rate on second-class matter was reduced from 2 to 1 cent per pound when sent out by publishers, and the unit weight increased from two to four ounces when sent out by others than publishers.

It seems to have escaped the attention of Congress that these sweeping reductions, while being wonderfully beneficial to the public, could not help but affect disastrously all salaries based upon receipts from postage, and we claim that when these reductions were made, the effect of which was undoubtedly intended to increase the quantity of mail-matter handled in every office, the relation of compensation to labor performed should have been so fixed that postmasters would be at least in part protected against the reductions in their incomes which has been the result of that legislation.

Now, in support of this proposition we need only refer to the following facts, deduced from the first report of Postmaster-General VILAS to the present Congress: In the year following the decrease in letter postage the number of offices advanced from the fourth to the third class by reason of the natural increase of business was but nineteen, and of this number eight were in the rapidly growing States of Kansas and Nebraska; while during the same period one hundred and nine offices retrograded from the third to the fourth class, clearly showing the disastrous effect of that one reduction and that, too, in the face of a known and demonstrated increase of five per cent. in the postal business of the country. And not only that, while 109 offices were so affected as to drop one grade, yet it brought many others to the very verge, and they only escaped by the most vigorous efforts upon the part of postmasters to prevent that result. Many citizens who had a pride in their town and felt an interest in its development regarded it as a positive disaster to have the grade of their post-office reduced; and out of the most commendable motives, increased their postage accounts in order to save, as they thought, the honor and prestige of their city; and it was only by such exertions as these that many were saved. The people generally take pride in the fact that their post-office is of the Presidential grade, and regard it as a substantial evidence of the growth and prosperity of the town when their post-office is advanced from the fourth to the third class; and, likewise, they view with alarm any lowering of its grade.

But even if the reduction in postage had produced the anticipated result of increasing the postal business of the country to such an extent as to prevent any decrease of compensation to postmasters, yet it does not require a mathematician to demonstrate that even in that event they would be expected to perform one-third more labor than before, while the pay remained the same. If it was the purpose of Congress to deal fairly by the postmasters then it becomes a clear proposition that when their duties were augmented their commissions should have been increased.

## THE QUESTION OF RENT.

The question of rent is one of the most serious moment. Every community demands and expects that the post-office shall be located at the most accessible point in the town, no matter what the rent may be, and they feel, too, that their office should be supplied with all the latest and most approved fixtures, never taking into consideration that the expense of all such paraphernalia must be borne by the postmaster himself.

The attention of Congress has been repeatedly called to this great injustice in the reports and recommendations of the Department, and we are glad to be able to cite the fact that the present efficient First Assistant Postmaster-General has taken the most favorable view of the matter. General STEVENSON forcibly says:

> In the act approved March 3, 1885, a proviso was incorporated giving the Postmaster-General discretionary authority to lease premises for use of post-offices of the third class from July 1st, last, but provision for the payment of rent was not made. That is, the Postmaster-General was authorized to make disbursements for rent of premises leased for third-class offices out of the appropriation for rent, fuel and light for the present fiscal year. This appropriation, however, was $10,000 less than the sum estimated for first and second-class offices.
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> Postmasters at offices of third class are now compelled to pay the expenses of rent, light, fuel, stationery and miscellaneous items, and in some cases a part of the clerk hire. It is a hardship to compel these postmasters to pay these expenses from their salaries or from their private funds. As stated by the Postmaster-General last year see reoprt of the Postmaster-General for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1881, page 20), there is no reason why these expenses should not be paid at third class offices as well as at first and second-class offices.
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> I renew the recommendation, therefore, that provision be made for the payment of rent for offices of the third class. I am of the opinion, also, that the Government should provide for the payment of expenses for fuel, light, stationery and miscellaneous items for these offices.

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"I SEE that an Ohio postmistress has resigned her position to get married," remarked an old Benedict to his wife.

"Poor thing! I pity her!"

"Why so?"

"Because, after the honeymoon is over, she'll have to sit up every night and wait till the *male* comes in."

## THE SMALLER SEPARATING OFFICES.

The question of compensation to postmasters at the smaller separating post-offices for the large amount of extraneous labor they perform is a matter of great moment to hundreds of worthy men. The complaints from this source are numerous, and only those who are advised upon the subject can form any idea of the onerous character of the work they perform and for which, in many instances, no compensation whatever is received. There are many offices where the labor involved in the separating and distributing of mails for other offices is equal to one-half of the entire work of the office; and their arrival and departure are at such unseasonable hours as to compel them to be at their offices from early morning until late at night.

This service is so exceedingly exacting and the compensation so very inadequate whenever any allowance is made, that it is almost impossible to retain clerks for that service, many of whom enter upon it and remain long enough to learn the scheme of distribution and then suddenly quit, leaving the postmaster to do the work himself as best he may, and, as a consequence, the public is made to suffer. We doubt whether there is a third or fourth-class postmaster in the United States who is allowed as much for clerk hire as he is compelled to pay out. General STEVENSON, the First Assistant Postmaster-General, speaking upon this subject in his first annual report, says:

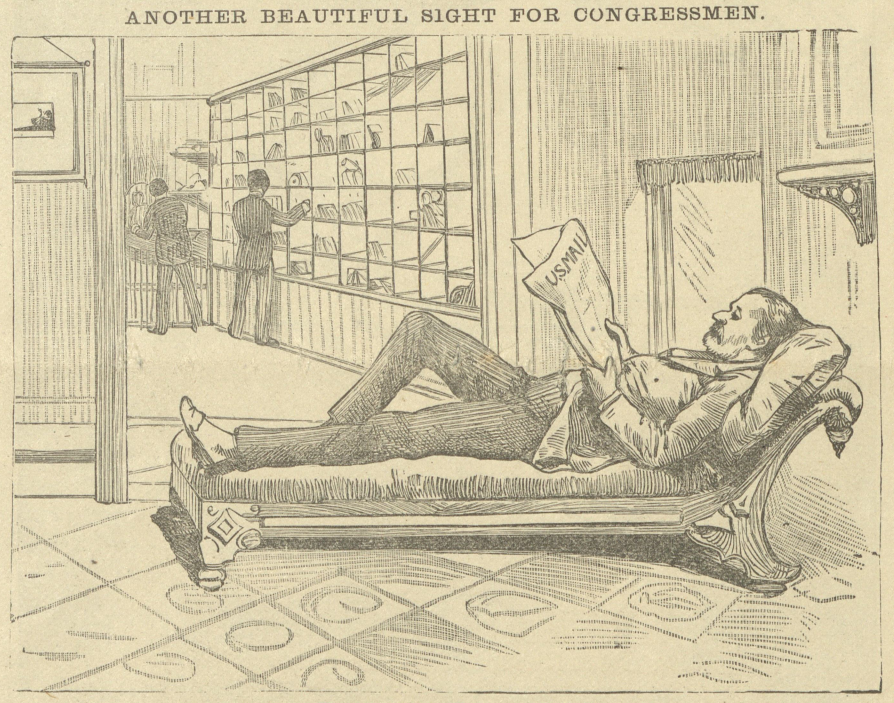
> "Clerks in post-offices should be fairly compensated for their services. Their hours of duty are long, and their work, to be efficiently performed, requires close attention and study Separating clerks, or clerks at offices of the third and fourth classes, where mail is distributed for other offices, merit favorable attention. Many of these clerks are not paid enough to induce them to take proper interest in their work." (See Annual Report for 1885, p. 222.)

THE UNITED STATES MAIL is made the receptacle of every character of complaint of postmasters from one end of the Union to the other, and we have no hesitation in saying that the great labor of separating mails at the smaller offices, without any compensation, or if any, so slight that it is a mere bagatelle, is one of the most serious injustices now practiced upon them. The Department is willing and anxious to deal justly by the postmasters, but it is hampered everywhere by the inadequacy of Congressional appropriations. The blame for this state of things lies entirely with Congress. If the fourth-class postmasters want relief, then let them take a hand in the movement we have inaugurated and co-operate with us. There is no hope outside of concert of action. It is the mission of THE UNITED STATES MAIL to let an electrical light shine upon all such abuses.

## POSTMASTERS' CLAIMS.

The postmasters of the third and fourth classes are making a quiet effort to secure from the Government a recognition of the fact that they have grievances which ought to be redressed. It appears that while the postmasters of these two classes number about 15,000, and therefore constitute by far the greatest part of this class of Government servants, they are not paid according to the service rendered, and are even subjected to unfair treatment, from the fact that they are required to defray out of their own pockets, and from the salary they receive, many expenses which are strictly official. For instance, the postmasters of the first and second classes have all the expenses of their offices paid by the Government, which is nothing but right; but a grave injustice is done to other postmasters by compelling them to pay office expenses out of their salaries.—*Cleveland Leader.*

ANOTHER BEAUTIFUL SIGHT FOR CONGRESSMEN.




Second-Class Postmaster. Salary, $3,500 per Annum.